

# Essays in Philosophy

A Biannual Journal

Vol. 1 No. 2

Vol. 1 No. 2, June 2000

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## Wittgenstein and Marx on 'Philosophical Language'

### I. Introduction

For Marx, very famously, the point was to change the world, not merely to describe it, as philosophers do / had done. For Wittgenstein, perhaps likewise, philosophy can, famously, only describe, and leaves the world 'as it is' -- though what exactly that means, I will discuss later.

But then, we are immediately inclined to ask, of these unusual ('limited') visions of the nature and power of philosophy: what is the status of Marx's (or Wittgenstein's) own discourse? Are Wittgenstein and Marx describing, when they say these things; or what?

Here is Harry Redner:

"Marx was the first major thinker to have explicitly undertaken the destruction of metaphysics on the basis of a new conception of language... . The destruction of metaphysics and the creation of a new concept of language went hand in hand in Marx's philosophy and that of the other Faustians [Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Wittgenstein]. Language was discovered as its metaphysical cover was dissolved. Marx begins by noting that metaphysics is language concealed:

"The philosophers would only have to dissolve their language into the ordinary language, from which it is abstracted, to recognize it as the distorted language of the actual world, and to realize that neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own, that they are only manifestations of actual life."

In this passage there are already all the terms and turns that will play such a prominent part in subsequent Faustian destructions of metaphysics."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed; what fascinates here, in the present context, is the strikingly Wittgensteinian tenor of the nested remark, especially of its first half. For Marx is not simply saying that philosophical language becomes propagandistic ideological language in its propositions and in its effects; he is saying that the language itself -- not only what is said in it -- is a 'distortion'. (He is saying, we might say, that philosophical language is...alienated.)

When we recognize in this remark of Marx's an anticipation of Wittgenstein and/or of so-called Ordinary Language Philosophy -- which is to say, in part, that we recognize this remark because of our familiarity with a view we know of as fully developed elsewhere, i.e. that we have already tacitly re-framed Marx in the light of our knowledge of Wittgenstein & co. -- we can begin to appreciate the depth of the problem of the status of philosophical discourse itself, especially that of

Marxians or Wittgensteinians. For, as Redner continues:

"Marx characteristically overreaches himself and speaks too sharply of a general 'dissolution of philosophy', not distinguishing too sharply between 'philosophy' and 'metaphysics', and he was unknowingly followed in this by the other Faustian thinkers, who frequently presented their critiques as attacks on philosophy itself."

I have argued elsewhere (in my "The real philosophical discovery", *Philosophical Investigations*, 1995, on which I draw here) that the problem Redner identifies can be solved, at least in Wittgenstein's case. But the solution is radical.

## II. Wittgenstein: an 'end-of-philosophy' philosopher?

Let us look briefly at my argument, at the moment in Wittgenstein's later work which seems most open to being read as Redner would read Marx (and Wittgenstein), but without the use of a critical word such as "overreaches". This is the apparent consideration in PI 133 of L.W.'s method(s) in his own later work directly contiguously with the idea of 'the end of philosophy':

"...[T]he clarity that we are aiming at is certainly a complete clarity. But this just means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear.

"The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of breaking off philosophising when I want to.--The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself in question.--But now we demonstrate a method by examples, and the series of examples can be broken off.---Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single Problem."

Now, Kelly Dean Jolley, in his important paper on 133,<sup>2</sup> claims that "Wittgenstein ...seems to have had an idea of what it would be like to have reached philosophy's end. Wittgenstein thought he could accomplish this feat simply by making what he called 'the real philosophical discovery.'" However, surprisingly, Jolley leaves entirely open what "the real philosophical discovery" is or could possibly be, only claiming that "...Wittgenstein did not think he had made the real philosophical discovery." But, not having been given an idea of what the content of such a discovery would be (as opposed to merely considering purely in the abstract its role in 'ending philosophy'), why ought we think that (according to Wittgenstein) there is or could be any such thing, any more than there is one singular philosophical problem?

The possibility opened up for us by the scholarly and substantive work of Cora Diamond et al<sup>3</sup> is that even here, at what others have called the close of the 'chapter' of PI on Philosophy, Wittgenstein may still be dealing with a logical temptation. That is, is it clear that the implied author of PI is earnestly counselling us unreservedly to the achievement of complete clarity? Might it not be rather, in a roughly Cavellian fashion, that one's right aim can best -- or even only -- be realized by means of appreciating that another way (of taking PI) is possible, one that does not simply buy into the 'correct', 'conceptual clarificatory' mode of proceeding, even as it sees clearly the (appealing) errors of interlocutorial voices that would counsel scientism, or applaud metaphysics, or even counsel deliberate unclarity? For, after all, most of the preceding 50 paragraphs of PI or more clearly engage critically such temptations both away from and toward clarity, logic. Why not here too? That is to say: if we can agree that the "sublimity" and non-

vagueness of logic, the "hidden essence" of language, the ideal of "crystalline purity"... if we can agree that these conceptions are never finally allowed to masquerade as well-formed by the implied author of PI, even when they seem absolutely to press themselves upon one, should we not be similarly willing to entertain the thought that the conceptions of "complete clarity", of the complete disappearance of philosophical problems, of "the real discovery", even of "[giving] philosophy peace", might themselves be similarly -- thoroughly -- problematic?

To argue thus is not to be committed to a totalistically deconstructive nor to a totalistically dialogical/dialectical model of PI in the sense of holding that there are no moments or passages in the text that we can provisionally identify as being closer to Wittgenstein's implied 'view' than any others. But this is only because, roughly speaking, the 'correct' voice would as it were be fully correct, would in all probability be Wittgenstein's 'view', were that all there is to it, were we still able simply to engage in old-fashioned philosophical debate with more or less misguided interlocutors, were we able to have what are well-described as philosophical 'views' any more. We might call this the "conditional correctness of the later Wittgenstein's philosophical position". We want to say that this 'position' would be correct (that e.g. we could hope to make "the real philosophical discovery") were it statable.<sup>4</sup> The problem is, that once we have perhaps grasped the highly unconventional (and even 'anti-philosophical') philosophical 'position' that Wittgenstein can be read as putting forth, we must -- to elucidate Wittgenstein -- go beyond this 'correct' view, the 'correct' voice, too, and not keep seeking for a philosophical position, of whatever kind. We must seek to understand where we already are, and what is "in plain view"; while appreciating that even these very terms exert a problematic hold on us, and at best serve to point up their own perniciousness along with that of the philosophical pictures they were seemingly designed directly to combat.

It might be objected, however, that there are conceivable candidates for the content of "the real philosophical discovery", which Jolley could have considered had he been so minded. And there surely are, in a sense: there are the kinds of discoveries made by Russell, 'the author of the *Tractatus*', Gödel. But these, Wittgenstein repudiated; according to the Diamondian reading, the possibility of making fundamental philosophic discoveries was actually repudiated by Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* itself, by 6.53.<sup>5</sup>

Are there any candidates that for "the real philosophical discovery" that Wittgenstein did not repudiate? Hilmy tries to put some flesh on Jolleyian bones: in his paper on PI para.133<sup>6</sup> he argues that the discovery in question is how ordinary language operates. This is at least a substantive contention that we can assess, the only such proposal for the content of "the real philosophical discovery" that I am aware of; however, assessing it doesn't take very long. For it risks buying into the very Malcolmian version of Wittgenstein that Jolley is (rightly) endeavouring to go beyond.<sup>7</sup> More concretely: one cannot, and this is terribly important, accurately be said to discover the nature of some particular linguistic terrain.<sup>8</sup> As I shall discuss in greater detail later, Wittgenstein (and even Austin) rightly do not think of themselves as giving a theory of language at all, not even an 'ordinary' or 'everyday' language theory.

Here is my polemical contention in a nutshell: that there is no indication in Wittgenstein's oeuvre that he thought the notion of the "real discovery" mentioned in 133 to be, philosophically-speaking,

other than chimerical. If one reads PI after the fashion of Diamond et al, then one thinks that Wittgenstein not only did not think he had made or could make "the real philosophical discovery" - - for he had no philosophical position, no view or opinion, and wanted none -- but that he wanted us thoroughgoingly to question why such conceptions and apparent aims hold any attraction for us, while understanding that they do. I would issue this challenge to Jolley, Redner, Hilmy, or to anyone else who thinks that 133 proves that Wittgenstein is an 'end-of-philosophy philosopher': show us a textual source for the thesis that there could, FOR WITTGENSTEIN, intelligibly be such a thing as making "the real philosophical discovery." Otherwise, we shall be licensed to conclude that -- here, just as (more demonstratively) in the preceding paragraphs of PI (and elsewhere) -- Wittgenstein is engaging our latent desire to mire ourselves in nonsense.

We may find it useful to attempt to imagine the end of philosophy, to imagine real 'discoveries' of a not-exactly-philosophical kind which could enable us to 'close' the philosophical tradition, bit by bit -- and I shall even do a little of this imagining, later -- but we should not think that there is any significant hope of so doing without speaking nonsense.<sup>9</sup>

An objection might be made at this point: that a reading of PI after the fashion of Diamond et al has not with any completeness been given. And this is true. Despite fragments and hints as to how it would go from the likes of Cavell (particularly), Diamond, Conant, Winch, L. Reid, McDowell, recent Putnam, E. Minar, and Guetti, no-one has yet more than begun to develop such a (practicable way of) reading. That is, (of) the Investigations in earnest, in toto, from such an angle (Whereas e.g. Baker and Hacker -- scholarly leaders of the so-called 'official' line on Wittgenstein -- have at least given a tremendously thorough and complete reading of the 'correct voice' beating down its interlocutor(s) throughout most of PI I. They take about as far as one can the project of demonstrating the 'philosophical correctness' and virtuosity of 'Wittgenstein's position'; only, against their own wishes, they necessarily make Wittgenstein sound sometimes (much too) much like any other philosopher with theses to support and an over-arching position to argue for. They fail to appreciate that Wittgenstein's 'position' can only be 'conditionally' correct -- and that the antecedent of the conditional is unfulfillable.<sup>10</sup>).

So, this is a key outstanding task for Wittgensteinian philosophers and scholars: to give a thorough reading of Wittgenstein's later work which understands him as not being an end-of-philosophy philosopher, and which truly hears the tone of his work, hears it as aspectual, not assertoric; as 'tentative', not as 'theoretical'; as involving crucially methods, but not Method. I hope to make a contribution to that task here.

### III. The 'flatness' of language

These philosophers -- and here I mean not just Wittgenstein, but also among others, as I shall claim, much of Marx -- are not best read as asserting The Truth, from a privileged philosophico-theoretical vantage-point, way 'above' praxis. (A fortiori, they are not giving us a meta-philosophy to sort out philosophy.) If they make philosophical discoveries at all, their character will have to be understood quite differently from the type of view which I have argued against, above.

For Wittgenstein, language is basically 'flat' -- like a city (see PI para.18). 'Philosophical language' is just a part of the city, though it appear to be a panoptical tower rising up above it. ('Meta-

language' (and meta-philosophy!), again, is also part of this flatness (see PI para.121). 'Meta-philosophy' is not a tower growing yet further out of the philosophical tower, to survey that.<sup>11</sup>) If there were these towers, incidentally, it would do no good -- for we would be launched on an infinite regress. We would need to always to resurvey the 'enforcing' meta-language we were using, in order to generate normative force with which to change the language 'below' -- and this need would infinitely ramify. Unless language can take care of itself, there can be no taking care of it. Philosophy leaves language as it is.

Thus we guard against the possible misleading implications of metaphors of 'survey', 'clear view', 'übersicht'. Language is flat. (My remarks too are intended to be transitional. A part of this flatness. Not truly 'meta', not a master-text, not colluding in the fantasy of an 'external' point of view upon language.)

Even given these provisos, though, we need to be still more careful with the picture we are building here. Rather than speaking of (say) 'philosophical language', we should probably speak of 'philosophical use(s) of language'. For use, of course, is paramount, for Wittgenstein. So the spatiality and non-dynamicity of the 'flatness' and 'city' metaphors may mislead. (And then there is a further, special, problem, which we must defer for now and will be discussing further shortly, with the idea even of 'philosophical use of language'. For does language have a genuinely philosophical use? Or are there important respects in which philosophical 'uses' of language are only pseudo-uses, instances of language out of use, not working ('on holiday')?)<sup>12</sup>

Can we succeed in construing language as 'flat', philosophical uses of language as everyday/ordinary?

The problem with which we began this paper now emerges quite starkly, though, with regard to Wittgenstein's so-called 'meta-philosophy'. How can we succeed in construing language as flat? In construing philosophical uses of language as everyday? Consider PI 120:

"When I talk about language (words, sentences, etc.) I must speak the language of every day. Is this language somehow too coarse and material for what we want to say? Then how is another one to be constructed?--And how strange that we should be able to do anything at all with the one we have!..."

We want to say that philosophical language can be everyday. We want to say also that it can sometimes be in some regard helpful to us (or why would we bother?). And that it has a problematic status with regard to its being a 'refinement' of our everyday language,<sup>13</sup> being, in fact, as we might say, parasitic upon it! Wittgenstein, again, thought of philosophy as an activity, and as one which might well never end, substantially change though it certainly would do (His 'kink' in the evolution of philosophy). Philosophy would be needed as long as we continue(d) to make certain kinds of deep errors, until conceivably a change in our lives might render us less prone to such endlessly-tempting errors.<sup>14</sup> Philosophy is an activity responsive to -- parasitic on -- error-making; but we have no grounds to think that even we would-be pure Wittgensteinians have yet begun truly to overcome such errors. The tendencies toward them are embedded deep within us, within our culture, within our language. (It doesn't much matter in the abstract which of these we say.). As seen above, these tendencies are there even in our very efforts to think ourselves out of them.

It is nevertheless also true to say -- and this is the 'conditional correctness' of Wittgenstein's 'view' again -- that in a certain sense Wittgenstein did think (also) that all would be well with philosophy, or with the subject with a legitimate right to inherit its name and/or mantle, if only one could and would 'survey' grammar and describe language-games aright, for whatever particular purposes were of (the) moment (Only don't think that one does any of this from some privileged or pure vantage point; and again, beware the dangers of metaphors such as 'survey' or 'surview'). For sure, one would have to admit, as Redner (over-)stresses, that any such surveys and descriptions could not avoid indirectly altering their 'subject-matter' slightly, at least (an important difference) indirectly.<sup>15</sup> Thus, while staunchly anti-(direct)-revisionism (see PI 124), as in a sense was Marx (he only thought the world should be revised, and that philosophising was unlikely to be an effective way of bringing that about -- in both respects again like Wittgenstein!), Wittgenstein yet thought that there was something that could be changed for the better by the right use of philosophical language. That 'right description' (albeit to a small degree -- the degree of smallness determined by philosophy's irrelevance to just about everything), hermeneutically involved in a (virtuous?) circle with that which it was describing, namely language use, could at least help us not to get lots of things wrong and confused in ways that we are highly tempted to.

Now, though, if we think about (say) the "Theses on Feuerbach", we are instantly inclined still to wonder: What is the status of the pieces of philosophic critique of philosophy we find in Wittgenstein (and Marx)? Can we get a clear idea of that?

Can thinking more concretely of Marx's political philosophy perhaps help us to find a way through in Wittgenstein's 'metaphilosophy'? For we appear to have a serious problem on our hands, even if my discussion above of what Wittgenstein is doing in his subtle offering to us of the chimera of 'the real philosophical discovery' is on the right lines.

For consider (the later) Wittgenstein's idea of philosophy as description, if (as) anything: even in the defenses cited above of his conception of philosophy, the status of 'philosophical language' is necessarily taken to be somewhat peculiar. For it is hardly descriptive in just the same way as one may describe (say) the look of one's lawn to a gardener, or describe the chemical structure of diamonds to a jeweller's assistant. And yet, if we look at that vital passage, PI 120, once again, we recall that Wittgenstein claims that

"When I talk about language (words, sentences, etc.) I must speak the language of every day. Is this language somehow too coarse and material for what we want to say? Then how is another one to be constructed?--And how strange that we should be able to do anything at all with the one we have!..."

Taking the satirical questions and the lovely ironical exclamation as read, the crucial sentence for our purposes here is perhaps the first. Philosophy is a certain -- quite ordinary -- kind of talk about language and the actions which it accomplishes and into which it is interwoven, for Wittgenstein. We want to say: Wittgenstein is just saying that he is using ordinary words here. Not magical words. Not even special quasi-technical words. And his remark is itself perfectly humdrum.

But what is the occasion on which it can make sense to utter 'propositions' such as these, such as these of Wittgenstein's? It cannot be an occasion on which we are literally informing anyone of



anything. But isn't that what descriptions centrally do? Inform?

But (t)his talk is not functional in the manner in which he (Wittgenstein) claims that ordinary language is functional or able to be functional, insofar as it is meaningful. For the descriptions of philosophy are -- would be -- 'pure' descriptions. Which is as much as to say: they are not assertoric descriptions, informative, not descriptions (of matters of fact), at all... . Again, we need to bear in mind that Wittgenstein took very seriously that there are no philosophical assertions, statements, propositions. And if we do that, we will be worried that Wittgenstein has failed to leave any room open for the status of his own remarks. Isn't he centrally interested in language in use; and isn't philosophical language, even his own, in an important sense out of use?

However, there is something here which may give us hope: for what Redner (and many others) have missed is that there is a large tranche of linguistic phenomena which Wittgenstein was very well aware was not dominated by functionality, even by a communicative purpose, and yet which could not be dismissed as merely unmeaningful. It tends to be discussed much more in the (often-neglected) second part of PI than in the first.<sup>16</sup> It has been fairly sustainedly drawn upon by James Guetti in his recent groundbreaking works on 'language philosophy' and Modern literature; Guetti has coined the phrase "grammatical effects" for what items of language do or have when their action is (mostly) not meaningful/functional.<sup>17</sup> Examples abound in poetry; but one can also cite numerous examples closer to the domain of 'ordinary language'; for instance, in jokes.

Such idling language often intensely interests us, and its grammatical effects are important to us. If we need to get clear about this (if, for instance, we are literature teachers who tend toward the odd theoretical assertion or perspective), then, once we are, there need not be further insuperable difficulties. Is it possible then that we can understand philosophical language, language being used for philosophical ends, as itself "out of use", "idling" (see PI 132)? This would give us a handle on what to say about philosophical claims about philosophy: they are almost inevitably nonsense, but they may be (transitionally) useful. They are idling, but their idling may prompt us to a certain useful kind of self-discovery.

But this would seem very drastic, a radical cure, perhaps worse than the disease. Can we really accept this? When a philosopher claims, for instance, that a certain type or instance of idling language is illicit or dangerous, let alone remarks that we fail to "recognize it [philosophical language] as the distorted language of the actual world" (Marx), or remarks that philosophy is always being "tormented by questions which bring itself in question" (Wittgenstein), then a kind of problematic just irrelevant to -- and in that sense not in play with -- more common or garden idling (non-functional) language is in play. In virtue of what could such claims themselves be exempt from their own scope; and precisely what follows if they are not? Can we really accept what follows, if they are not?

As S. Cavell has long held, one cannot simply exclude technical/ philosophical/metaphysical bifurcations from the 'rules' embedded in the 'concepts' of 'normal'/'ordinary' language on the grounds that they would break such rules. To do so is often to beg the question, and to miss the sense in which Wittgenstein is, out of necessity, inviting us to consider linguistic temptations to which he and we are both prey. There is something awry with (all) 'philosophical' language just as there is with 'ordinary' or quasi-ordinary language in which something is awry, even when the

speaking of that 'philosophical language' is a means toward becoming clearer as to what is awry with the language which is its subject. In other words: the moral of the *Tractatus* carries forward into Wittgenstein's later work.<sup>18</sup> Wittgenstein did not think that his own philosophy was exempt from the criticisms he apparently makes of 'uses of language' which are in an important sense not genuine uses of language. And again, as Wittgenstein held throughout his life,<sup>19</sup> the logic of language cannot be genuinely described.

If we are to approach closer to a resolution of the paradox in Wittgenstein's philosophy, if such it is well-described as being, which I have been discussing for the last few pages, then, we need to find another way into the question of how quasi-pathological language, but language which is not just nonsense as irrelevant to us as (e.g.) "sdihhvc 84hcvvdd a ifh", is even possible.

To re-state:

How can there be (parts of) language, species of linguistic actions, which must be as ordinary as any other (parts of) language; and which yet quite obviously are not?? Items of language that are only, 'purely', descriptive; and yet which theoretically cannot be,<sup>20</sup> and which in any case may have (at least propaedeutic, negatively useful) effects which seem "meaningful", "functional" to those in the relevant (philosophical) 'thought-community'? Parasitical, pathological linguistic items/actions that may purge us of the parasitical and pathological -- can these be realized? How, in short, can there be language which is just more regular language, but is yet philosophical, at all?

#### IV. 'Parasitic' language, and social parasitism

The question is one of parasitism; a kind of parasitism, in this case, of theory upon practice. It is particularly knotty, more so perhaps than the problem (say) of morality in relation to Marxism, or a host of other perhaps similar problems. If parasitical language is indeed parasitical, what is it?

In the remainder of this paper, I tackle this question as follows.

Firstly, having started to go into a little more detail as to how one might understand the question, I sketch a Wittgensteinian (reading of) Marx (with regard to "capital", and Marx's understanding of illusion/delusion).

Then I attempt to clarify the question of the status of philosophic discourse in Wittgensteinian thought by means of looking at it 'through' the consideration of the same question and of certain analogous questions -- beginning with one drawn from our Wittgensteinian Marx -- in Marxian thought (in relation to oppositions such as "the proletariat" versus "capitalists"). Finally, I draw tentative conclusions about how to understand Marx and Wittgenstein in the broader canvass of recent thought, and indicate how I see their radical place in the pantheon of philosophy and beyond.

So: What is 'parasitical language'? What are parasitical 'uses' of language? There may be a helpful analogy to hand. What is parasitism in social relations? What is it for there to be people who, though they are people (and people do things), live off the doings of others? How can they do so?<sup>21</sup>

These questions seem genuinely easier to answer than the questions we have been considering to



date. That is how the analogy may help us.

For it should immediately be obvious that accounts that have been given of certain historical phenomena -- the relations in feudalism, and capitalism, and the social entities (rights in bodies, land, capital itself) -- which can be used to help answer these questions.

We start to think, then, of everyday 'workaday' parasitism in society. Sketchily, we might venture that, like capitalists, philosophical uses of language apparently quite largely don't do work...

Of course, from a certain perspective, what effective accounts of these social and historic phenomena describe is clearly unjust, or against the interests of the majority; or even unreal. While the purely economic reality and power of "capital" has been accounted for by the Marxist tradition perhaps better than any other, it could be said that, at the root of the Marxist and other radical attacks on the import of capital, is the following: a sense that capital, and money more generally is, as well as being a reality right now, an ideological construct, and a (partially) dispensable one (albeit one which has been vital to the historical and economic development of the species). A sense that what is unjust is that capitalists and associated parasites do (labor) virtually not at all, while they reap vast rewards (from others' labor, of course) -- because of capital. Attention should be paid, in assessing reward, only to the labor invested, and to need, it could be (and of course, has been) claimed.

Now to say this kind of thing, I am claiming, is not to be giving a theoretical explanation, but rather a description of how things are, and the outline of (a description of) a plan of action. We are invited to hear the Marxist account of money etc. as a description.

Our institution of money is, and yet it radically distorts society, for Marx:

"I am ugly, but I can buy the most beautiful woman for myself. Consequently I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness, its power to repel, is annulled by money... [Money] transforms real human and natural faculties into mere abstract representations, i.e. imperfections and tormenting chimeras; and on the other hand, it transforms real imperfections and fancies, faculties which are really impotent and which exist only in the individual's imagination, into real faculties and powers. In this respect, therefore, money is the general inversion of individualities, turning them into their opposites and associating contradictory qualities with their qualities."<sup>22</sup>

This distortion is something that we could in some sense imagine turning around. If we were unprepared to accept the distortion, and committed instead to resisting the shimmer of money, its magic, its tempting qualities, it would be money which would be left high and dry, as a chimera, a nothing.

But what I need to do now, before going further into how this take on Marxism may provide us with a badly-needed handle on Wittgenstein (and Marx) on philosophy, is to justify more what the reader may already be seeing as a quasi-Wittgensteinian reading of Marx. I need to give an account of how Marx's accounts could possibly be rightly described as (after Wittgenstein) descriptions. I need to go into a little more detail on how we can successfully hear such phenomena as class relations, etc., described in Marx as 'irreal', as artifacts of delusion or illusion, in a Wittgensteinian

sense of those words.<sup>23</sup>

Let us take as our example a crucial Marxian concept, one which 'underlies' both money, and the class structure, for Marx: the commodity. Let us look briefly at the opening pages of *Das Capital*, at the notion of 'commodity-fetishism'. I will intersperse my comments with Marx's text, in square brackets:

"Commodities come into the world in the shape of use-values... goods, such as iron, linen, corn, etc. . This is their plain, homely, bodily form. [[Their home is in their use.<sup>24</sup> Try this: "What Marx does -- what we do -- is to bring goods back from their metaphysical to their everyday use".]] They are, however, commodities, only because they are something two-fold, both object of utility, and, at the same time, depositories of value. [[To mix Wittgenstein here with Heidegger: They are not only things; but nor are they exclusively exchange-values (or 'depositories' thereof -- the term 'depository' itself seems to me to play a role in demythologizing what is going on here); they are also use-values -- which is as it were a 'tool-value'. It enables you to do something.]]...

The value of commodities is the very opposite of the coarse materiality of their substance... Turn and examine a single commodity, by itself, as we will, yet in so far as it remains an object of value, it seems impossible to grasp it. [[Cf. staring at a word, and hoping to 'see' the meaning (failing to see that its meaning li(v)es in its use); or indeed compare staring 'at' one's visual field.]] If, however, we bear in mind that the value of commodities has a purely social reality, and that they [commodities] acquire this reality only in so far as they are expressions or embodiments of one identical social substance, viz., human labor, it follows as a matter of course, that value can only manifest itself in the social relation of one commodity to another." [[We examine the full reasons for and consequences of this momentarily. For now, it is worth noting the connections to (and differences from) the latter part of PI para.120: "You say: the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)" Wittgenstein is pointing out the metaphysics which failing to understand social institutions can get one into. Marx is pointing out the metaphysics which social institutions themselves can get one into if one is not vigilant. And as Derrida writes, money is, for Marx "always described...in the figure of the appearance or simulacrum, more exactly of the ghost." (*Specters of Marx*, p.45f.) It is we who, believing in the ghost, make it real.]]

I think Marx is saying terribly commonplace things about commonplace things here.<sup>25</sup> I think that's great -- I think it is that aspect of what he is doing that has not been properly received (and that is admittedly sometimes obscured by his use of words we are accustomed to in apparently-novel ways, or of new words). I really do believe that my Wittgensteinian etc. interpolations, above, draw one's attention to the 'ordinariness' of what Marx is up to with words, like the 'ordinariness' of what Wittgenstein is up to. (As we have already seen, the scare quotes here nevertheless mark an issue, an issue we have not yet succeeded in resolving.) I don't think Marx is offering us a 'definition' of a commodity, still less a theorization of the economy. It is true that to some extent Marx gives us a new way of talking, a new 'vocabulary' -- to that extent, what he is doing is like what Freud does, according to a sound Wittgensteinian (Conantian, or Elderian) understanding of Freud's

achievement. But, more than Freud's,<sup>26</sup> Marx's approach is open to being read as itself quasi-Wittgensteinian, as itself posing a new way of talking only as a ('self-deconstructing') way of getting us to see more clearly what we already know. I think Marx is trying to get us to see things about our commerce (!) with objects and with each other that are perfectly straightforward; but also deeply obscured.

Now, I am not saying that this way of reading Marx definitely works. Or that it will carry through into all the rest of *Capital*.<sup>27</sup> (Though I do strongly believe that it would be a mistake to see the discussion of commodities as the generation of a model that will be the reductionistic basis for a subsequent thoroughgoing Theorisation -- a mistake almost as great as the reading of the opening sections of PI in such a manner. The 'language-games' of PI are demythologizing 'models', objects of comparison to free one of mental cramps, nothing 'more'.) Nor am I saying that this way of reading makes all of Marx's remarks acute or even purposively comprehensible. I think we should not fail to be struck by the strangeness of the opening of *Capital*, by the strangeness of our being presented with these commonplaces (As, again, we should be struck by the strangeness of (the opening of) PI -- Is this philosophy? What is the point of these 'remarks'? Are these 'theses'? Or trivialities?). I am only saying: Here is an agenda for research. Here is a way of reading Marx that has been signally unseen. If I am at all right about Marx, then there is something badly wrong with almost everything else that has ever been written about his work. It is worth trying to pursue this way of reading, to see what if anything it yields, and what it challenges.

What a society where the exchange of commodities for money creates, according to Marx, is a society where

"...the social character of men's labor appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labor; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labor is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labor ... [T]he existence of...things qua commodities, and the value-relation between the products of labor which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. There it is[,] a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order...to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor, so soon as they are produced as commodities." (Marx, *Capital*, pp.320-1 of *The Marx-Engels Reader* (ed. Tucker, New York: Norton, 1972)).

Thus it is that commodities are rendered "mysterious" to us; and this is something we do, this is a body of human activities. Commodities abstract away from their specificity as use-values, and from the specificity of the labor that went into them. They become, they are, interchangeable, and thus producers (laborers) no longer realize clearly that they (commodities) are now the mode through which they (people) are relating to each other -- relating their labor, and everything else.

This is the conceptual basis of money. But, in its everydayness, it is invisible.

## V. Marx on labor: a Wittgensteinian view

To see in more detail why, we come to Marx on labor. And here what we find is very interesting. Marx precisely tries to get us to see what is hidden from our view through being so commonplace (see PI para.129).

In his effort to understand what a commodity is (or rather, to avoid misunderstanding it, as he fears 'bourgeois economy' consistently does), Marx notes that we cannot depend upon use-value; for it is precisely in their exchange-value, which abstracts from any particular uses, that things are commodities:

"If then we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities, they have only one common property left, that of being products of labor. But even the product of labor itself has undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value; we see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing. Its existence as a material thing is put out of sight. Neither can it any longer be regarded as the product of the labor of the joiner, the mason, the spinner, or of any other definite kind of productive labor. Along with the useful qualities of the products themselves, we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labor embodied in them, and the concrete forms of that labor; there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labor, human labor in the abstract." (*Capital, The Marx-Engels Reader*, p.305; my italics).

All this is something that the market (i.e. certain very important of our activities) does, not something that Marx is imposing upon it as a positive theory. Marx is following though, is attempting to depict, the logic of our social life.

An exchange-based system has, then, a logic which leads all human labor to seem equivalent, or at least 'equivalentisable'. All. But then, does Marx's account of exchange-value as "congealed quantities of homogenous human labor" pose as a true theoretical construct, or as something much more fantastical and absurd? David Andrews writes:

"Is value the expression of socially necessary abstract labor or is this simply an illusion? Marx's use of the religious metaphor to describe commodity fetishism connotes some type of illusion, suggesting that there is something unreal, or at least of questionable objectivity, in exchange-values. This illusory character of value leads Cleaver to conclude that Marx's notion of commodity fetishism amounts to "denouncing<sup>28</sup> the analysis he has just undertaken."... But while the objective character of value does have an illusory aspect to it, it is a "prosaically real, and by no means imaginary, mystification". Marx points out that the idea that there can be social relations between things is "fantastic", but he says that this is "what they are". (p.6 of an unpublished draft paper.)

For again, commodity fetishism is something which people, perhaps regrettably but as yet perhaps inevitably, do.

Cleaver at least recognized that there is a serious problem of interpretation here in *Capital*, a

problem which has been unsatisfactorily skated over or 'resolved' by many of Marx's readers, especially in Economics. But Cleaver has completely failed to see the point (as has, admittedly, almost everyone else) of what Marx was up to, even so. Marx has not given us a theoretical 'analysis' which he has then fatally undermined. He has given us a tool for description, which he hopes will enable one, among other things, eventually to leave it itself behind (In this regard, the 'labor theory of value' is then rather like the 'picture theory of meaning', or even so-called 'use theories of meaning'. It is itself a picture, one whose worth is ultimately in part to be appreciated precisely by means of our understanding of its eventual conceptual inadequacies and transitionality). Marx hopes that the fantasticness of what he is showing us about ourselves will lead us to revolt against it. He shows us the patent nonsense that in its everydayness we fail to see, the nonsense that we are latently committed to, and he hopes that we will draw the requisite conclusions -- in action, not just in mind.

In short, Marx has not given us an economic theory of capitalism -- and a good thing too. He has given us something more 'important', more 'profound' (the scare quotes indicating that the use of such words runs the risk of our re-instituting the oxymoronic category of 'profound' nonsense; something self-deconstructing cannot literally have a profound content). Marx has given us a set of tools for understanding our current social relations -- a set of tools which simultaneously may help us alter ('dismantle') those relations. (It is high time, in this age of economism and multinationalism, that philosophers understood more about 'the market'. But they can I think genuinely hope to improve their understanding through Marx, more than through what is from a philosophical point of view well-described as the bankrupt scientism of neo-classical economics (or indeed, of 'Scientific' Marxism, be it of Althusserian or of any other stripe).)

Marx's 'position' is in a sense self-deconstructing. His 'analysis' does indeed in a strong sense ultimately undermine -- dismantle -- itself. But this is its point. We need to draw the requisite conclusions eventually, against Marx's 'theory' itself (as against any 'positions' we find ourselves attributing to Wittgenstein). We don't even need Derrida to come along and do this. It really is implicit in Marx.

But this 'self-deconstruction' has to be understood in a very particular way. It is a deconstruction...which has to be actualised by us (not simply conjured in an academic treatise, such as Derrida's *Specters of Marx*).

What would be left to us, after a successful incorporation of Marx's simplified 'language-games' of value, his vocabulary, into our descriptions of social phenomena, and their consequent self-overcoming and self-deconstruction, would be not nothing, but perhaps some sense of the specificity of human needs and of human laborings to satisfy those needs. The abstraction of general labor would no longer remain. (For it would have no contrast class.) Truly back, at last, to the rough ground, we would then be -- to the variegated uses ('use-values') of work and of things.

Andrews writes that "Marx himself drew an analogy between value and language: "the characteristic which objects of utility have of being values is as much men's social product as is their language.""<sup>29</sup> I think that from the discussion above we can draw the following result: the internal connection between language-game and practical activity (the latter being sometimes usefully referred to as 'form of life') is an effective analogy for -- because, basically, just a general case of --

the relationship between our ordinary 'language-game' of 'value' and our ordinary practices ('form of life'). And Marx's account is an elaboration of -- a bringing to self-consciousness of -- the former. Marx's discussion of value, which perhaps now the reader can truly start to hear as 'descriptive' -- while sometimes obscurely written, and somewhat deformed by some scientific elements of presentation, and by an only partly and (thus) insufficiently 'anthropological' approach -- is thus, as Andrews says, in a vastly different relationship with value-constituting activity than is suggested by "the positivist neoclassical conception according to which theory and reality stand opposite each other as explanation and reality to be explained."<sup>30</sup>

## VI. Implications: Parasitism and inclusion

The upshot of the above? According to Marxism, everyone is a doer, a coper, a laborer. (We say this 'transitionally') But in society, and in psychology, there is 'false consciousness' and 'ideology'. So most of the privileged classes cannot see the reality of their also being...laborers. Not divinities, not privileged by right, but just (lazy!) workers.

So: we have a class or classes, capitalists (plus also managers, petit bourgeois etc.), who are parasites on the proletariat, on the workers. But there is also an important, a crucial sense in which there isn't anything other than 'the proletariat', if only we let ourselves construe the latter sufficiently broadly. We are all workers (though let us remember again that this would fail to stand, were it to be heard, as Cleaver (along with almost everyone else hears it, as a theoretical assertion, thus in conflict with Marx's account of the irreality of exchange-value (heard in turn as a theoretical assertion))):

"[T]he value of a commodity represents human labor in the abstract, the expenditure of human labor in general ... Skilled labor counts only as simple labor intensified, or rather, as multiplied simple labor, a given quantity of skilled being considered equal to a greater quantity of simple labor ... For simplicity's sake we shall henceforth account every kind of labor to be unskilled, simple labor; by this we do no more than save ourselves the trouble of making the reduction." (*Capital, The Marx-Engels Reader*, pp.310-1).

The logic of this could be extended up to managers etc.; and why not all the way to the capitalist? It is only the grand shared fantasy of exchange-value which distinguishes the capitalist's labor from anyone else's.

Here we have the 'democratic' levelling potential of (understanding) the effects of 'commodityism'. And the remarkable thing is how all this comes out of thinking through carefully the logic of, the social relations of, an exchange-based system (viz. in our case, 'capitalism'), not out of any theory.

Now of course, we ought to be careful about how far we take this 'parasitism' analogy. For while Marxism indeed sees capitalists as parasites, and as vampires,<sup>31</sup> it also recognises that they are invaluable, essential to the system as it currently stands. They couldn't be simply excised.

Rather, there is a 'symbiosis' -- and some of the roles of capitalists play ('entrepreneurial', etc.), would in some sense or under some description be essential even in a radically-reconstituted society. It is not a question of simply abolishing capitalists; but nor, either, of course, of simply giving them a bit more work to do. There is a symbiotic parasitism, an ecological system involving



mutual benefit -- though hardly in a desirable state of equilibrium! In a state, rather, which Marx, as we have seen, not unreasonably characterizes as deeply exploitative, highly undesirable -- and, moreover, literally absurd.

But should this useful correction of our parasitism analogy, this introduction of the idea of a symbiotic element to the parasitism, should this actually surprise us that much, and cause us to give up the basic analogy? Not at all; for, after all, this was no more than we should have expected of the multifarious possibilities offered us by the concept of 'parasite'. For, after all, it is well known that the most effective parasites do not kill their hosts, and indeed perform certain services for them...

Here is Derrida, putting much the same point quite interestingly:

"It should also be remembered that the parasite is by definition never simply external, never simply something that can be excluded from or kept outside of the body "proper"... Parasitism takes place when the parasite...comes to live off the life of the body in which it resides--and when, reciprocally, the host incorporates the parasite to an extent, willy nilly offering it hospitality: providing it with a place. The parasite then "takes place". And at bottom, whatever violently "takes place"...is always something of a parasite." (LI p.90; see also p.77)

So then, let us try another analogy, to illuminate all this further:

What happened at one of the crucial points in 1789 was that the progressive elements of the first two estates in France recognised that it was their democratic and patriotic duty to join with the Third Estate, in a meeting where the Third Estate would of course numerically dominate. This was, in a sense, an affirmation that all there was (is) is the Third Estate. That only an ideology which was real in its effects but wrong in its underpinnings was fostering the illusion that the 'Estate-boundaries' marked real differences between human beings. The nobles and clerics, parasites upon the commoners, were declaring that really they were commoners -- which as is much as to abolish the distinction between commoners and the rest, and thus to eliminate too the category of 'commoner'.<sup>32</sup>

I think the same is the logic of Marxism. Really, there is only the proletariat, in a necessarily broadened and 'bloated' sense -- in the sense of workers, by hand or by brain.<sup>33</sup> Even if those 'workers' (be they agricultural laborers, or even managers, or even (crucially) owners) are in some cases doing extremely little -- just shuffling a few papers around or telling their subordinates where to invest their 'money' or such like. (They are still workers -- though to say so is already to take one further step toward a vision of one day being able to leave that category behind.) Capital, money, are social constructs in a more fundamental sense than are (say) people, or work.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps then we really don't have to excise the parasites.<sup>35</sup> We have, rather, to convince everyone, including them, and ourselves, that there can't really -- in our realization -- be any such thing as class distinctions, for people. That conviction will have the consequence that it is seen to be just ridiculous for some to live largely off the labor of others. The parasites can be integrated, once it is actively realized that they are nothing other than people, like us.

## VII. Using Marx to understand Wittgenstein on (philosophical) language

And this, I think, is how we can understand Wittgenstein on philosophical language. It is not that 'philosophical language', 'metaphysical language', 'meta-language', language even of the kind that Wittgenstein himself will be heard as speaking just insofar as we do not take completely literally and seriously his injunctions against 'theses' in philosophy etc. -- it is not that this language needs to be excised, because it is the speaking of nonsense. Rather, it needs to be shown for what it is -- either nothing, in which case there is nothing to excise; or perfectly ordinary and everyday remarks which everyone will agree to, and/or which have perfectly fine homes in particular language-games. In the latter sense(s), 'philosophical language' can be integrated back in with our language-games -- it does not need to be excised, it is not genuinely parasitic. (But it is well on the road toward no longer being philosophical (language), either.)

Thus one might want to see the 'class interest' of everyday language as requiring the 'expropriation' of philosophical language -- but there is only likely to be a lasting peace if instead the 'parasitic' language is re-heard as being just more everyday language, only everyday language that we have unfortunately been 'systematically' and 'ideologically' educated to hear as magical. This is Wittgenstein's critique of alienation -- of alienated language. (This is something which he was clearer and more far-seeing than Marx on -- but further down the same track, not in opposition.<sup>36</sup>) Such language needs to be brought back to the everyday. Back to work.

Metaphysical doctrines, metaphysical language is, as Wittgenstein once said, like the magic gift in a fairy tale. In the enchanted castle, it appeared something splendid. In the cold light of day, we see that it is only a piece of old metal.<sup>37</sup> 'Philosophical language' in general is just such old metal. It is the language of every day, transposed and misunderstood. There is actually no parasitism of the kind we imagine, even we Wittgensteinians. To see 'philosophical language' as something special, to see 'it' as deep nonsense, or as language that succeeds in being pathological, is still to give it too much credit. There is, in fact, no 'it'. But this is something that we have to realize in ourselves, to see, to make (it) true. It won't be true, if it's just a theory, a thesis.

Wittgenstein's language, his own 'speaking outside language-games', is transitional -- it is intended to be part of a (probably never-ending) project of getting us to be able to be free of philosophical worries (of certain strange kinds of perplexity); even worries about the character of language being used 'outside language-games', ultimately.

So, if we return to PI 120, I think we can see a reading of it that, while not shirking the drastic consequences of Wittgenstein's uncompromising auto-critique, facilitates our not seeing that critique in the final analysis as criticism. There is only the language of everyday, Wittgenstein is saying. But in saying that -- which, if heard 'literally', would itself be a metaphysical claim -- one is perhaps less likely to be misunderstood if one makes clear that one's remark is to be heard as a suggestion, as well as or even rather than as a description. (Let us recall the following of Wittgenstein's remarks here: "What we call 'descriptions' are instruments for particular purposes" (PI 291). Again, this illustrates the constitutive absence of any proprietary language in which to conduct philosophical investigations, the non-existence even of a 'Wittgensteinian' privileged discourse for conducting philosophy, for assembling 'descriptions'. Alternatively, we might for certain purposes (!) risk saying, 'Descriptions are never just descriptions' -- and now we need to rethink somewhat my earlier remarks concerning what it means for philosophy to 'purely' describe.)

If it (e.g. PI 120) is a description, it is more like (if you like) a description of a 'program' for research and thought.<sup>38</sup> To say that there is only the language of everyday is not to make one more philosophical super-statement. Wittgenstein's own remark, seen aright, is just an ordinary everyday remark. But the fact that we find it systemically hard to hear/see it that way suggests that we have a long way to go in ridding ourselves of the kinds of delusions that Wittgenstein takes us to be subject to. The contrast of everyday vs. philosophical may be usefully termed 'transitional' -- but let no-one be under the illusion that this will be a short transition, or a clearly-imaginable one, even. Only a transformation of our (philosophical?) community<sup>39</sup> will potentially enable us to really rest easy with Wittgenstein's remarks -- and once we could rest easy with them, we would no longer need them. For likewise: only a transformation of our society (societies) will enable us to rest easy with the claim that "Everyone is a worker; only some people don't work hard enough, and so others have to work much too hard (etc.)"; and once we could rest easy with such a remark, again we would no longer need it.

We don't, I venture to assert, need further proof of this. Marx and Wittgenstein, as I will explicate in greater detail below, try to create the conditions for their own otioseness, even for their own incomprehensibility -- but they and their philosophies aren't necessarily needed for the creation of those conditions. In part, because they are not teaching us ordinary (or even extraordinary) facts, at all. They're teaching us ways of seeing or being; or (more precisely), ways through the ways of seeing and being that we unfortunately at present have. But such ways are accessible to anyone, in principle, from first principles. One doesn't need to be taught a body of knowledge by anyone to acquire them -- or to transcend them. ...But if we do still want philosophical 'proof' of all this (of this wholism and nonsupernaturalistic humanism, and of the first inklings of its eventual self-overcoming), at least in the sense of seeing what I am saying in (the early) Marx himself, surely it is ready for us; and indeed, though I cannot explore this further here, was arguably present already in Hegel<sup>40</sup> (and, in embryo, in Kant<sup>41</sup>). In Marx, the relevant concept is 'species-being'. The early Marx's humanism<sup>42</sup> is I think centered around just the kind of vision of humanity in its polity as I have sketchily depicted above.

Philosophical underpinnings of all this: Mulhall on the early Marx Marx envisions human being -- species-being -- as follows:

"[I]ndividual men [are] microcosms of human social history and the human social present, [as Marx says]: "Though man is a unique individual -- and it is just his particularity which makes him an individual, a really individual communal being -- he is equally the whole, the ideal whole, the subjective existence of society as thought and experienced. He exists in reality as the representation and the real mind of social existence, and as the sum of human manifestations of life.""<sup>43</sup>

Thus he sees individual humans as the whole, as well as as parts of the whole, and as individuals. There is nothing outside it/us -- compare, nothing outside the everyday.

This presages, I think, a sense of integration of all persons into a society as the true vehicle for their individual autonomy.<sup>44</sup> If there is to be real fulfilled humanity, everyone must be persuaded that their deepest interests lie in giving up the delusion that class is real, that capital is real. (Much as,

likewise, if there is to be real fulfilled humanity, then we -- very generally -- must overcome alienation, and no longer be confronted by objects we produce as alien things, but rather be part of a seamless web with them, and with(in) the broader environment.) But let me be clear what I do not intend by using the language of reality and illusion etc., here: to see the ruling class as parasites can only be transitional -- it is not a seeing of things as they truly are in the sense in which we see things as they truly are when we clean our spectacles. Because it is rather, broadly speaking, seeing in the sense of Winch,<sup>45</sup> and in the sense of Wittgenstein's PI, para.s 125-9: "The aspect of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to see something -- because it is always before one's eyes.)" A blind person will not be helped, if you clean their spectacles. And nor (more precise analogy) will someone be helped to see the beauty in the world around them by having their spectacles cleaned, alone.

The point of such seeing and of persuading others so to see is, among other things, an unavoidably ethical and political one. It is a call, a call which hopes to hasten its own irrelevance.<sup>46</sup> And here I have some sympathy with David Lamb, who has powerfully claimed that

"To Hegel's conception of philosophy as the comprehension of the world, Marx...wanted the power to change. Yet, at the same time, he held with Wittgenstein that a philosophy standing outside the world is idle. For the answer to this riddle we must appreciate that for Marx, like Hegel before him, having an adequate grasp of reality means that one has transformed both oneself and the object known in doing so. Just as an adequate understanding of the reality of smallpox is reflected in the vaccinephilosophical understanding is complete at the very moment it has transformed reality. The perfect comprehension of reality is attained at the moment philosophy breaks into a practical effort to change it. In this way the realisation of philosophy is one and the same with the abolition of philosophy."<sup>47</sup>

One of the changes I would make to this passage, which clearly has some real resonance with my aims and conclusions in the present paper, is to note that the vaccine analogy is not close enough. The combating of the parasite, of the disease, is, for Wittgenstein, coterminous with the true diagnosis of it. (The criterion of truth is not external to the conquering of the illness, in this case.) The disease is rendered harmless when it is truly seen to be nothing other than a little bundle of cells. The solution to the philosophical problem, again, is to see that the magic ring is simply a piece of old metal. The truth is that 'philosophical language' is at best just more everyday language.

The truth is that everyone is a worker -- in other words, that no-one is a worker in the sense in which we currently understand that term (as opposed to ... a capitalist, or some such.)...

But by this point, an objection may have been crystallizing in the reader's mind, an objection to the apparently non-materialist mode of my presentation of insights I am drawing from the Marxist tradition. Here is how Mulhall expresses the potential objection:

"[T]hese formulations [of Marx's conception of human practical activity] may seem like metaphysical hocus-pocus or part of the excesses of Romanticism: are we meant to mount a critique of a system of economic production or of social relations on the ground that few of its participants experience a mystical union between subject and object?"<sup>48</sup>

Mulhall goes on to argue that "Marx's characterisations of fulfilling practical activity can be interpreted as picking out a very common...human experience, and one which can be characterised in ways less reliant on Romantic articulations of the agent's experiences and attitudes." So he endeavors "to bring Marx's characterisations down to earth."<sup>49</sup> He gives as common and ordinary examples a carpenter, or a tennis player, on days when their work, their activity, is proceeding in an observably impressive 'seamless' manner. He goes on: "Just as talk of fulfilling labor as being work in which one experienced a seamless union with one's activity and its objects could be stripped of its Romantic metaphysics and related to a perfectly comprehensible aspect of human life, so talk of human practical activity as a teleological whole can be stripped of its organicist vocabulary and related to a recognisable feature of human behaviour."

How can this be done? In part, by invoking certain key features of human behaviour as these are recognised by ... Heidegger and Wittgenstein:

"[W]hy does Marx regard the (forced or voluntary) acceptance of conditions of work whose effect is the transformation of human practical activity into mechanical motion as the negation of the worker's very humanity? Why should practical activity which manifests the fluidity and seamlessness to which Marx's notion of mechanical activity stands as a contrast be regarded as the fulfillment of human nature -- the achievement of genuine humanity?

The answer can be stated as follows: Marx is able to regard this feature of human practical activity as fundamental to his conception of human fulfillment because it is a central aspect of our concept of human behaviour -- it is one of the central features which marks out behaviour as fully human, as the sort of behaviour to which we can respond as the field of expression of a soul...

[T]his aspect of genuinely human behaviour -- this aspect of our concept of the human is the subject matter of Heidegger's reflections on the readiness-to-hand of objects and on the way in which human existence is a matter of Being-in-the-world; and...it is also the focus of Wittgenstein's remarks on aspect-perception...

I want to suggest...that the root of Marx's conception of human nature and human fulfillment lies in a sensitivity to precisely the aspects of our concept of human behaviour with which both Wittgenstein and Heidegger are concerned... What we must remember here is Marx's fundamental guiding assumption -- namely, that human beings are a species of animal...

[T]he fluidity and seamlessness upon which Marx (as well as Heidegger and Wittgenstein) focuses can be seen as an aspect of the animality of human action, a manifestation of the fact that human beings are not so much machines as organisms."<sup>50</sup>

So now, if we have a philosophical anthropology here, it is again not one which we sensible intellectuals need to worry about if we are somewhat impressed by critiques both of the Enlightenment and of Romanticism. More generally, of humanism insofar as humanism is Essentialistic. I am advocating Marx's 'philosophical anthropology' only insofar as it is compatible, which I think is surprisingly far, with Wittgenstein and the best of Heidegger.<sup>51</sup> Only insofar, that is, as

(1) It is not problematically 'Scientific'<sup>52</sup> or 'Realist', it does not pretend that we are doing something quasi-biological when we give an account of species-being, and nor does it pretend that we see things as they truly are in a straightforward empirical way when we see things as the

proletariat see things, when we see things from the correct historical point of view of the oppressed;

(2) It is truly open to the openness and open-endedness of 'human nature' -- it is in effect saying, among other things, that it is humanity's nature not to have a fixed nature, an essence; and, a corollary of (2);

(3) it is not used to exclude certain things from being human (such as highly diverse cultural practices) which have a claim to be human.

Point (3) is important, and indicates why perhaps we might want to play safe by thinking in terms of 'philosophical ethnography' more than philosophical anthropology. The idea of 'ethnography' inclines one more toward actual investigations of real phenomena of human being, and inclines one away from the armchair. And it doesn't hold itself hostage to as yet unimaginable possibilities of human being which may, for all we know, already exist in some part of the world today. Even the kinds of extreme possibilities, of which we mostly just don't know what to say about them, that we find in some of Wittgenstein's 'thought-experiments'.

Wittgenstein has been called by Jerry Katz a 'deflationary naturalist' -- the label seems to me apt. This is a naturalism only in being opposed to supernaturalism, not in being Scientific. Wittgenstein regards humans as animals; but as cultural,<sup>53</sup> speaking and doing animals. Again, I think that the key features of Marx, especially the early Marx, can be seen as quite compatible with this 'picture', with these purpose-relative and historically-contextualized grammatical remarks. As Marx says: "[S]ociety is the accomplished union of man with nature...the realised naturalism of man and the realised humanism of nature."<sup>54</sup>

### VIII. Wittgenstein's 'quietism' versus Marx's 'activism'?

But let us return to something I have already mentioned, for instance at the opening of this paper: don't we still have a conflict here, even a deep and obvious conflict, between Wittgenstein's claim that "Philosophy leaves everything as it is" (PI 124), and Marx's claim that whereas philosophers have only interpreted the world, the point is to change it?

Not necessarily, no.

Let us look at the 'quietist' reading of Wittgenstein for a moment. The reading of PI 124 as though Wittgenstein is a quietist has been under threat for some time now. Gellner's gross misreadings (and Nyiri's only slightly less gross ones) are not I think taken very seriously any more; and even the degree of quietism involved in the Baker & Hacker 'official' reading of Wittgenstein has come into question. We have even seen by contrast uses of Wittgenstein by neo-Pragmatists (e.g. Rorty, also Fish) which have pushed things in completely the other direction, and claimed that Wittgenstein may be of use to radical or reformist political causes.<sup>55</sup>

My own view is that it is vital to see that Wittgenstein didn't think that philosophy could be seriously engaged in anything other than processes of description and understanding -- as opposed to explanation. That is the contrast class intended. The contrast class is not intended to be the normative.



I will come back to Wittgenstein, on 'the normative' in a moment. But at this moment we should tarry a minute with Marx on explanation and interpretation. We need not assume that, for Marx, everyone who is not thoroughly philosophically ('Scientifically') 'informed' will be a victim of some salient false-consciousness. A picture holds us captive, because our economy repeats it to us over and over -- but the picture is also, for now, true.<sup>56</sup> "To [producers] the relations connecting the labor of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things." *Capital, Marx-Engels Reader*, p.321, my italics.) Further, the picture is of course perfectly useful and fine for the purposes of much day to day life (including, incidentally, that of economists). And again, no merely mental change, no mouthing of the words of an explanation of it, will change this at all: "The fact, that in the particular form of production with which we are dealing, viz., the production of commodities, the specific social character of private labor carried on independently, consists in the equality of every kind of that labor, which character, therefore, assumes in the product the form of value -- this fact appears to the producers...to be just as real and final, as the fact that, after the discovery by science of the component gases of air, the atmosphere itself remained unaltered."<sup>57</sup>

Explanation, for Marx, is of no real moment. (If this is right, it shows that the entire tradition of Marxism as Science is wrong.<sup>58</sup>) One needs people, rather, to be no longer metaphysically-misled in their understandings of their social relations. And this is a practical project, not necessarily one that will involve philosophy liberating us...

The consequence: I am suggesting that Marx could have endorsed PI 124, and indeed substantially more of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy, of his 'methods'. For Marx too does not, at his non-scientistic best, want to change things through explanation, but through description and action.

To return directly to Wittgenstein. Famously, Wittgenstein thought his own work to be thoroughgoingly ethical in nature, 'despite' the lack of explicit discussions of ethics. he took what he was doing to be fundamentally about providing people with tools with which they could change themselves.

This ethical aspect to Wittgenstein's work is I think deeply visible in the work of some of his greatest followers. I am thinking of Anscombe, Gaita, Winch, Diamond, Cavell, Conant. For these writers, the call to philosophy is a call to acknowledgement, to humanity, to ethics, to honesty, to inclusion. For sure, one may hope that one's philosophy may eventually become unnecessary -- but this kind of withering away is distant, and is surely not incompatible with a suitably -- and correctly -- vague (Marxian) vision of the withering away ... of the need for law, politics, etc., too.<sup>59</sup>

The consequence: I am suggesting that Wittgenstein could have endorsed Thesis 11 of the "Theses on Feuerbach", and indeed substantial amounts of the recommendations of paths toward 'utopia'<sup>60</sup> -- of the descriptions -- that we find elsewhere in Marx!

So we see that Marx was not an explainer as people have taken him to be; and that Wittgenstein was not anti changing things (even by means of philosophy!). There really is far less of a gap between them on this score, apparently the insuperable obstacle before a bringing of them together,

than has almost invariably been supposed. (The gap is mostly one perhaps of degree of social optimism.)

For, most crucially, and continuing the thought about 'withering away': Wittgenstein and Marx both tried to help create the conditions for their own irrelevance. Unlike the great system-builders of the past, and even unlike many Analytic and scientific philosophers of today (who would like to think of their fash as involving anonymity quite centrally, but yet cannot think that human beings will ever have enough knowledge -- or, rather, sense -- not to need to read the products of their 'scientific inquiries'), they would both have been proud of a possible future in which they were no longer read, because nobody could understand what they were saying any more, because what they had said had done its job. In that sense, they may be said to have aimed at a closure<sup>61</sup> of philosophizing even if they did not have as a project or even a coherent idea the end (the ending) of philosophy.

This is crucial: they both (especially perhaps Wittgenstein), while 'happy' with their own parasitism on the deep problems and delusions and mythologies of their own time, cautioned against thinking that it was possible clearly to imagine what would in fact come after them, what the possible future in which they were irrelevant would look like. To claim that one could imagine clearly a future beyond class conflict and alienation, or beyond philosophical confusion, would be hubristic.<sup>62</sup> They tried to bring about the conditions for their own irrelevance, and their own overcoming; but not, thankfully, to tell us much about what the promised land after their success would look like.

I am not saying that Wittgenstein entails Marx, nor vice versa. But I think they can fit, and that suggestions to the contrary are based probably on dubious political prejudices, not on philosophical argument. Wittgenstein opposes Marx when Marx would treat a positive Scientific explanation of society (e.g.) as available, in particular as philosophically available. But the point may indeed very much be still *to change the world*.<sup>63</sup> A key question is likely to be whether philosophising is well-suited to making that happen. Or would just getting out there doing good deeds or getting active not be likely to be more successful.<sup>64</sup>

In relation to this question, consider PI para.133 one more time: "The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy ... [t]he one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself in question." If a real philosophical discovery is chimerical, then, despite the importance of Wittgenstein's remarks on the not-necessarily-problematic character of philosophising about philosophy (there being no need for a "second-order philosophy"), there remains not only a sense in which Wittgenstein's later work must run the same risks as the *Tractatus* (philosophy will always be bringing itself in question<sup>65</sup>); there is also scope for the serious Pragmatist question to be raised: is this kind of activity worth the time and effort? What makes it so vital (and in what sense "vital"; or "signal", or "urgent", or "of enormous significance"?) to get Wittgenstein right, if the ethical point of his philosophy (or life) or of ours is probably achievable with more facility through other means than through pursuing philosophy?<sup>66</sup>

But these questions of course become somewhat transfigured if we recognize that there could be changes in the nature of our life which would render certain philosophical temptations and confusions otiose and powerless. And this keys in with my remarks above about Wittgenstein's and

Marx's (importantly and properly limited) imaginings of (the way toward) 'utopia'. We can continually try to end philosophy through philosophy, but it would not really be ended til certain things happen in our lives, and in our societies, which are not by any means conditioned only by philosophy. Thus the only potentially non-chimerical "real discovery" (N.B. not a philosophical discovery, necessarily -- the decisive reason for the failure of Jolley's reading of 133 is that he assumes that the real discovery must be philosophical) would be an experimental discovery whose character we cannot identify, in the future of human history. As Wittgenstein put it: "I am by no means sure that I should prefer a continuation of my work by others to a change in the way people live which would make all these questions superfluous. (For this reason I could never found a school.)"

Conclusion: The point is to live differently, to change (one's/ our) way of life So, how best, exactly, to change 'things'? And what exactly to change?

Andrews argues as follows: "For Marx the objectification of labor as value is not a theoretical analysis which is imposed on commodity production from without... [S]ince people do equate their diverse labors through exchange, to say that labor is the source of exchange-value in commodity producing society is not an explanation of exchange-value, but simply a description of what people actually do." He goes on:

"Marx mocked the Young Hegelians for believing that simply recognizing that people allow their own ideas to rule over them is sufficient to overcome those ideas:

"The phantoms of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations. Let us revolt against the rule of thoughts. Let us teach men, says one, to exchange these imaginations for thoughts which correspond to the essence of man; says the second, to take up a critical attitude toward them; says the third, to knock them out of their heads; and -- existing reality will collapse."<sup>67</sup>

The reification of labor as value is connected to and informed by the activity, the form of life, of people in commodity producing society. Therefore to overcome commodity fetishism it is necessary to change the way people live; i.e., change their form of life." (Andrews, pp.6-7)

Philosophy has strict limits -- but it can help if it is truly philosophy in action, in life. This, Wittgenstein and Marx did -- provide tools for living life differently. Metaphysics, class, 'commodity-fetishism' are, unfortunately, things that we do. But not because of some innate and unalterable feature of human nature.

So my Wittgensteinian account of Marx, and then my 'Marxist' account of Wittgenstein (on 'philosophical language'), is not philosophical Idealism. It (Philosophy in the best sense, one hopes) describes, rather than explains -- but its describing not only motivates to action, it is (continuous with) action.

And perhaps now it is fairly clear to the reader, if it was not before, the kind of thing which I hope to have been doing in this paper, with its analogies etc. and its shying away from explanation. I consider us needful of real thinking, of thinking which actually enhances and transfigures our understanding, and orientation to the world, and of action; not of theories, or dry explanations. If we leave aside, then, the distortions that tend to be produced by the rhetoric of 'Scientific

Socialism', we can see how Marxian thought on the nature of society, on the nature of human beings, and on the nature of classes, need not actually be incompatible with Wittgensteinian thought on the same 'topic(s)'. As Andrews holds, Marxism at its best is not a theory at all, but is part of a mind-broadening and blinders-removing social study. Marx didn't guard nearly as much as he might have against the pull toward 'objectivity', toward theory; but insofar as his 'descriptions' which we are enjoined to attempt to hear as descriptions are logically tied to their basis in ordinary people's lives and experiences, we need not condemn him any more than we would Wittgenstein.

There is a clear sense in which one can say that people are victims of false consciousness, of ideology, of alienation; but we don't have to see this in terms (for example) of some kind of psycho-analytical or cognitivist model of 'the unconscious.' People's false consciousness, which they have been involved in constructing, is continually available for deconstruction by them, by the means of their own resources. Winch et al do not contradict the Marxian insights I have endeavoured to draw from Marx, Kautsky et al. Winch makes central for us the respects in which we must understand humans, if we are serious about understanding them in all their commerce with each other and with the world, as practical understanders (which crucially involves norms, rules, and what the ethnomethodologists call 'indexicality', 'accountability' and 'reflexivity'), and as doers, not as automata, nor as intellectuals (except when they /we actually are intellectuals!). And we can perhaps begin to imagine a truly Marxian economics, an economics which, after Winch, would not try to be something other than a social study (and not disjoint from philosophy<sup>68</sup>), and which would thus, after Sraffa's (and Keynes's) critiques, be very far from Neo-Classical economics, but also, after von Mises's critiques, be far from Soviet etc. economics too.

To see all this is, I think, to take a step beyond the recognition (e.g. in Rubinstein) of the profound commonality between Marx (and Hegel, and indeed Heidegger in Division 1 of Being and Time) and Wittgenstein on sociality, on the fundamental sense in which the very existence of human beings can in a certain important context be usefully said to be a social phenomenon, a social activity.<sup>69</sup> For while this (again Winchian) thought is surely right, understood aright, I have tried in this paper to sketch a perhaps more controversial but in a sense even more far-reaching connection between Marx and Wittgenstein. Let me try now to sum up what that is, and sum up thus my conclusions in this paper:

There is a sense in which what we have in language is a parasitism of some small set of aberrant propositions upon the rest. And another sense in which there cannot be any such thing as such aberrant propositions. We are called upon by Wittgenstein -- early and late -- to actualize, to realize, this non-being of metaphysics. There is a sense in which we have in society a set of stratified classes, with (to simplify!) one class parasitic upon the other, much larger class. And another sense in which there cannot be any such thing as this parasitism; that it deconstructs itself, through us. We are called upon by Marx --early and late -- to actualize, to realize, this non-being of social metaphysics, of mental metaphysics, this unnecessary (although not scientifically-mistaken) way of thinking and being.

The calls upon us that Marx and Wittgenstein make, I am claiming, have this great feature in common. And the understanding of the mutual illumination we can attain between Wittgenstein's 'critique' of 'philosophical language' and a truly Marxian critique of ideology, alienation and class division can, I hope to have shown, bring this starkly and strikingly into relief. For if one wants to

know, for instance, where in Wittgenstein one finds notions which directly correspond to the Marxian notions of 'alienation' or 'estrangement', one need look no further than the notion of 'philosophical language'. And thus it is the concepts of the ordinary and the everyday, in Marx as in Wittgenstein, which offer us, if anything does, keys to 'philosophical enlightenment', and (thus) to the closure of philosophy.

### **Appendix: Derrida's Marx.**

In the main body of the paper, above, I have given a Wittgensteinian reading of Marx. Elsewhere,<sup>70</sup> I have attempted the same with regard to a more recent great Leftist, Noam Chomsky; specifically, to his political and historical work, where he brings words like "American" and "national interest" and "Communist" and "conservative"<sup>71</sup> and "victory" and "freedom fighter" and "truth" back from their metaphysical to their everyday uses.<sup>72</sup> But again, does Wittgenstein's talk, in PI 116, of the "original homes" of words, and of their everyday uses as opposed to their metaphysical uses ... does this talk imply that there actually is such a thing as the metaphysical use of a word? Is this, contrary to what I argued earlier, Wittgenstein's real 'position'?

Well, as usual, it doesn't much matter what you say, so long as you are clear about it. But I think it will be most useful to continue to say, with Cavell, that 'metaphysical use' is a fantasy, albeit a deeply-attractive one. As Martin Stone puts it:

"Wittgenstein identifies philosophy's metaphysical voice as his critical target. But this alone would hardly distinguish him from any number of other philosophers within the huge Kantian wake of philosophy's self-criticism. So it would be a mistake to infer, from such a metaphysical target, that the contrast Wittgenstein wishes to draw [in PI 116] (between himself and others) should not embrace -- or even refer most especially to -- those philosophers who set their face against metaphysics. "We bring words back" -- Wittgenstein is to be read as saying -- "in contrast to the way other philosophers criticize metaphysics; in their form of criticism, words remain metaphysically astray.""<sup>73</sup>

In, for example, Derrida. For, while there is indeed a powerful deconstructive voice in Wittgenstein's text it is not, as I stressed earlier, any more his view than is the metaphysical voice (or even, to be precise, the 'official voice').

Here is a relevant quotation from Derrida's *Limited Inc.*, in a passage strikingly suggestive of the views he has enunciated recently in *Spectres of Marx*:

"If conventions are, in fact, never entirely adequate; if the opposition of "normal" and "abnormal" will always be lacking in rigor and purity; if language can always "normally" become its own abnormal object, does not this derive from the structural iterability of the mark? The graft, by definition, and herein no different from the parasite, is never simply alien to and separable from the body to which it has been transplanted or which it already haunts." (*Ltd. Inc.*, p.82)

And again,

"The "standard" cases of promises or of statements would never occur as such without its "normal"

effects, were it not, from its very inception on, parasited, harboring and haunted by the possibility of being repeated in all kinds of ways, of which the theater, poetry, or soliloquy are only examples... From this iterability -- recognized in principle by Austin and [Searle] -- [I seek] to draw the consequences: the first and most general of which being that one neither can nor ought to exclude even "strategically" the very roots of what one purports to analyze. For these roots are two-fold: you cannot root-out the parasite without rooting out the "standard" ["le propre"] at the same time." (LI, p.90).

But the suggestions I have made in the main body of the paper deflate Derrida's claim here: there are perfectly good methods for and reasons for "strategically" focussing one's attention on certain things, for the purpose of assembling reminders, not of generating a set of theoretical assertions. When one at a different moment re-integrates the parasites, and understands that in a certain sense they were never separate from one in the first place, and then, the hope is, one leaves behind the means by which one effected the re-intergration -- then one can truly root out the standard and the parasite together. Because one is simply leaving behind that binary opposition, no longer using it ('circumventing' it, to use Rorty's useful term<sup>74</sup>). All Derrida's sniping and drama will one day, if one follows Wittgenstein (and, I am suggesting, strong strands in Austin, and in Marx, and even in Chomsky), be simply unnecessary. In a possible half-imaginable future beyond philosophy, there would literally be no need to call stage-promising, stage-thunder, etc. 'parasitic', no calling for the deconstructive drama of 'hauntology'.

It is appropriate at this point then to say a few words more about the leading deconstructive reading of Marx himself: namely, Derrida's. Let me start by noting that there is in *Specters of Marx* -- and this is a refreshing change from some deconstructive writing, including even some of Derrida's own -- a fairly clear-headed avoidance of modishly neutralizing Marx through being 'post-Marxian', not allowing oneself to be dismissive of the politics and thought of this living icon: "People would be ready to accept the return of Marx...on the condition that a silence is maintained about Marx's injunction not to decipher but to act and to make the deciphering into a transformation that "changes the world". ...[S]uch an ongoing neutralization would attempt to conjure away a danger: ...now that Marxism seems to be in rapid decomposition, some people seem to say, we are going to be able to concern ourselves with Marx without being bother -- by the Marxists and, why not, by Marx himself, by a ghost that goes on speaking. We'll do it systematically, by respecting the norms of hermeneutical, philological, philosophical exegesis." (*Specters*, p.32. Cf. also pp.51-52, and p.89.) I unite with Derrida in rejecting this deadening, appropriative, coldly-scholarly version of Marx as simply a philosopher, in a narrow sense of that word. And in thinking that the question is 'Whither Marxism?', not 'What to do, now that Marxism is dead?'

Invoking the figure of the 'specter', Derrida essays an understanding of the irreality, for Marx, of the very phenomena whose reality he (Marx) is perhaps showing us clearly for the first time. And Derrida is also very much onto the plurality and spectrality -- the pastness, presentness and (most important) the futurity of Marx's ideas.<sup>75</sup> He is talking, in a way, then, about just what I am talking about in my analogisations of Marx and Wittgenstein.

For, incidentally, what my argument above suggests is I think a productive way of reading Derrida's *'Specters of Marx'*, and thus of reading Marx a little more naturalistically than Derrida does. We go from parapsychology to parasitology -- we would have to drop most of the



Shakespeare stuff in Derrida's text, but that would not be any great loss, -- we 'supplement' the notion of haunting with that of parasitism ... we perhaps rename the book, 'Parasites of Marx'. We are living off and in Marx. And, more important still, Marx's notion of class is a notion of parasitism -- with all the complexities we have noted in that notion -- more than it is of haunting; and what makes class possible and real (as well as unreal) is the way that commodities live off us. Our alienation consists in the fact that they should be our servants -- but they are, instead, parasites powerful to the point of ruling our lives.

I am suggesting, then, that the binary oppositions such as "normal vs. abnormal", "everyday vs. philosophical", "labor vs. capital" are indeed lacking in "rigor and purity" IF one's model for this purity is Science. If instead, contra Derrida (and Searle!), one understands these oppositions to be non-technical, transitional, part only of philosophical (grammatical) remarks, then there is no problem in principle with the methods of Austin and Wittgenstein (and Marx). In a certain sense, then, mistakes are everyday, acting and poems are everyday<sup>76</sup> -- of course, what else could they be? But this sense is a 'bloated' sense of 'everyday', in which it has no contrast-class. Both this sense of it, and the slightly more restricted sense in which it is used methodologically to distinguish the normal from the pathological, the ordinary from the philosophical, are philosophical tools which one should not expect to be pure in the sense of 'fixed', 'part of a lasting scientific theory'. Because that is not what they are for. No more than, reading charitably and attentively, we should expect the word "labor" in Marx to have a singular technical sense. For it will do its job for us only if it is plural and ambiguous (like the words of the *Tractatus*, on my reading of that work, for example<sup>77</sup>). I.e. If it is both a pseudo-technical term referring to something abstract and generalizable, and a pseudo-technical term more narrowly referring to something which proletarians do. And we must be ready for both these senses of the word to fade, in so far as they ever succeed in ... doing their 'job'. (A strange job, whose 'work' is in a central sense purely negative, and self-annihilating. (Though I suppose there are jobs like that?...))

And we cannot say what sense we will have for the words "labor" and "everyday" which could last through the transitions which Marx and Wittgenstein attempt to facilitate. But eventually there might be no such categories for Derrida to endlessly snipe at.<sup>78</sup>

Derrida is quite right to observe that if the category of "mistaken" is logically dependent upon the category of "correct", and likewise for other important philosophical binary oppositions, then the reverse is true too. And any counter-suggestions by Searle or other mainstream philosophers are absurd. But we need not take from this Derrida's quasi-sceptical moral, his quasi-repudiation of the everyday. For I have shown what moral we can take instead. The moral that Wittgenstein (both obviously in the *Tractatus* and more subtly later) and, I have suggested, Marx, take. The non-theoreticistic and anti-Scientistic moral implicit in the understanding of the hoped-for temporal undermining of philosophical categories, even one's own. We don't have to say for example that use is infected through and through by mention; we can say rather that the need to distinguish use from mention is one which will only be a problem for someone who has philosophical problems, only for someone who has not (as none of us, I think, yet have) managed to understand concepts like "everyday" and "philosophical" such that Wittgenstein's descriptions can truly be seen and experienced as trivially true, such that thus we can really give up the idea of having any philosophical theses to defend. (Searle, of course, even more than Derrida wants quite straightforwardly to have theses to defend, contra PI 128.) And we can say that a binary opposition

which has truly served its purpose and had its day is one the terms of which will simply be given up (as, for instance, Davidson suggests we simply ought to give up the schema of scheme and content<sup>79</sup>), not one which we will endlessly deconstruct and reconstruct.

If what I am talking about, when I say these things and when I remark that my own remarks are not intended to be exempt from their own field of force ... if what I am talking about is well characterized by the concept of using concepts "under erasure", so be it -- I would be delighted. But I think that the subtle differences I am pointing up between Wittgenstein's truly radical conception of philosophy and Derrida's in practice somewhat more traditional conception of same are important enough that we would be well advised to use Derrida's ways of describing the matter only with extreme care (...under erasure?!). Especially as Derrida makes such extravagant claims for his set of 'non-conceptual concepts'.

So I am agreeing with Stone that, in spite of their apparent closeness, we very much need to notice the differences between Wittgenstein's critique of metaphysics on the one hand, and the Derridean critique, which mostly, in the final analysis, fails to return word to their everyday uses, on the other. But I differ from Stone somewhat, in wanting to suggest ways in which certain other critiques of metaphysics, such as the Marxian, are actually significantly closer to Wittgenstein's than we have been led to believe.

Because, to recall, what I have been doing throughout is attempting to think through carefully the related status of concepts such as 'proletarian' and 'capitalist' in Marxian thought, and of 'everyday' and 'philosophical' in Wittgensteinian thought.<sup>80</sup>

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## Notes

1. *The Ends of Philosophy* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), p.113. Cf. also Redner's explicit comparison (on p.116) of Marx with PI para.116, with Wittgenstein's appeal there to return the everyday usage of words: "[T]his is exactly what Marx undertook when he advised philosophers 'to dissolve their language into ordinary language.'"

It is worth noting the actual wording of PI 116, which is strikingly similar, though not perhaps "exactly" the same: "When philosophers use a word...and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language, which is its original home? // What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical, to their everyday use." [I have emended the translation. The Anscombe translation misleadingly inclines one toward the reading of PI 116 according to which words really do have metaphysical uses, and according to which we could speak intelligibly of 'the metaphysical language-game'. Wittgenstein speaks not of language-games where words have their original homes, but simply of the language ("der Sprache"); language in use, which is the home of words. As opposed to words being exhibited (as they are in (too) much philosophy, and also (but with much pleasanter effects) in much poetry, as discussed below, and in my "Meaningful Consequences" (jt. with J. Guetti, in *Philosophical Forum* XXX: 4 (Winter 1999), pp.289-316)).]

2. *Philosophical Investigations* 16:4 (Oct. '93) 327-332 [henceforth 'Jolley'], to which my piece in the same journal is a reply.

3. See e.g. her *The Realistic Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T., 1991). In what follows, I follow Diamond's (and Conant's) exemplary reading of Wittgenstein as resolutely anti-theoretical and anti-thesis, as highly-continuous in his concerns in his philosophy early and late, and as committed throughout to an 'austere' conception of nonsense (and thus to 'profound' nonsense being an empty category).

4. But this is not to imply that there is something which is not statable although it ideally would be.

5. Although 'the later Wittgenstein' found it hard to see things this way, as evidenced for example by the toughness of his few remarks in PI on T L-P. Compare also the following: "In my former book the solution of problems was still far too little presented in a plain manner. It still appeared too much as though discoveries were necessary in order to solve our problems and everything was still too little conveyed in the form of the grammatically obvious in ordinary language. Everything still appeared too much like discoveries." MS 109, pp.212-3, cited by Hilmy on p.211 of his *The Later Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987). But it is important to note that what Wittgenstein takes exception to here is his own manner of presentation of his attempt to wrestle with "our" problems. And this is exactly my thought -- that it is the manner of presentation that primarily changes between the 'early' and the 'later' Wittgenstein, not many of the philosophical thoughts themselves (Though this formulation may misleadingly suggest that the style and method of Wittgenstein's work can be dissociated from its content; indeed, that it really has a content in any traditional sense.). It should I trust be obvious that it is to some extent Wittgenstein himself, and -- much more accentuatedly -- Hilmy (compare pp.61-3 and p.211f. of his book), and many others besides, plus to some extent Jolley, who have dichotomised Wittgenstein's later philosophy from his earlier one. I reject such formulations of a dichotomy, again following Diamond and Conant. I am thus committed to the claim that Wittgenstein somewhat misinterpreted his own 'early philosophy' in later years -- or at least, that he was hard on it in the light of its massive misunderstanding in others' hands. If all this is right then it is of course true to say among other things that "the author of the *Tractatus*" as later construed by Wittgenstein (and others!) was not in fact identical with the implied author of the *Tractatus*, according to the best available interpretation of that work.

6. S. Hilmy's "'Tormenting Questions' in *Philosophical Investigations* section 133" (in Arrington and Glock (eds.) *Wittgenstein's 'Philosophical Investigations'* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp.96-9).

7. I argue against Malcolmian and other 'use-theory' versions of Wittgenstein (construed as giving us substantive accounts of how everyday language works) in "Meaningful Consequences" (op.cit.). (See also n.55, below)

8. And even if, per impossibile, one could, this would still not amount to there being such a thing as "the [singular] real philosophical discovery", only lots of little such 'discoveries' (and again, we should note that it is the dissolution of various particular confusions and problems that Wittgenstein mentions with approval at the close of para.133.). In this connection, it is worth noting the earlier format of 133, in the 'Big Typescript': "Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single

problem. . . 'But then we will never come to the end of our job!' Of course not, because it has no end." (quoted on p.165 of David Antin's "Wittgenstein among the poets", *Modernism/Modernity* 5:1 (Jan. '98), 149-166).

9. To be more precise: I shall distinguish later between the project of ending philosophy (itself conceptually confused, according to Wittgenstein as I have expounded him) and the aim of closing philosophy (perhaps also mired in nonsense, but at least in ways which are of interest and moment).

10. For detailed critique of Baker and Hacker along these lines, consult the essays by Conant and E. Witherspoon in Read and Crary (eds) *The New Wittgenstein* (London: Routledge, 2000); and Read and Guetti, "Acting from Rules: 'Internal Relations' versus 'Logical Existentialism'" (*International Studies in Philosophy* XXVIII/2 (1996), pp.43-62).

11. I suspect that there is the same flatness when it comes to 'base' and 'superstructure' in Marxism. My quasi-Gramscian thought here is that one should put all of society's productions and reproductions potentially on a level, not privileging one set of relations (as in economic determinism), if one is to understand society in a non-impositional way -- and if one is to avoid self-refutation, by privileging philosophy / social theory / 'science' above (e.g.) economic factors, in the very gesture of supposedly privileging economic factors! Philosophy cannot intelligibly understand itself to be merely superstructural. (Though it can perhaps understand itself to be parasitic and aim at being dispensable, in the special sense for these ideas elucidated in this paper.)

12. There is of course a problem specifically with my likening of Marx to Wittgenstein on this score of conception of philosophy: Marx quite often self-identifies as a scientist. As a Truth teller. This is completely contrary to the tenor of Wittgenstein's philosophy and Wittgenstein's self-identification. Allow me to return to this in the closing Sections of this paper; for now, let me merely mention that I think and hope that this self-identification of Marx's is, surprisngly, quite largely removable in favour of an alternative, more coherent and less troubling philosophical identification.

13. Though here we should note the absence of effective technical terms from philosophy -- this is very important. See my "On the eliminability of technical terms from philosophical enquiries" (paper given to the Human Sciences Seminar, Manchester Metro. U., Oct. 31 1996; and to the Philosophy Seminar, Humanities, Exeter University, Dec. 4 1998).

14. Cf. Wittgenstein's RFM II 6; and my remarks below on a certain sense in which it is intelligible to aim at the closure of philosophy, at the closure of established traditions and the continual self-deconstruction of one's own efforts at closure. Cf. also the following vital remark from p.61 of *Culture and Value* (ed. von Wright, Chicago: U. Chicago Press, 1960): "I am by no means sure that I should prefer a continuation of my work by others to a change in the way people live which would make all these questions superfluous. (For this reason I could never found a school)". We will return to the spirit of this crucial thought later.

15. This is what I call elsewhere (see my Ph.D, *Practices Without Foundations?: Sceptical Readings of Wittgenstein and Goodman*; Rutgers, 1995) 'philosophical ethnography'. One describes -- and people may be affected / persuaded by one's descriptions. One perhaps hopes that they will be. (See below, for connection of this with the more venerable notion of 'philosophical

anthropology'.)

16. And it tends to be discussed a lot by recent French philosophers -- see below. Guetti grasps the nettle that Derrida (on p.98 of *Limited Inc.* (Evanston IL: Northwestern, 1988 (henceforth LI))) shies away from -- he (Guetti) is prepared to risk saying that there is a sense in which the novelist or poet truly has truck with a general citationality. That, in short, we could do worse than to hear all literature as being defined by its being quotation, or reported speech.

17. See our "Meaningful Consequences" (op. cit.).

18. See Conant's recent work. And compare p.56 of *Culture and Value*: "Don't for heaven's sake be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense."

19. See for instance Wittgenstein's *On Certainty* (New York: Blackwell, 1969) (henceforth OC), para.501.

20. Among other reasons, perhaps, because (as we have noted above) Wittgenstein elsewhere joins Pragmatism in saying that 'pure description' can only ever be an idealisation out of the instrumentality which is language in action, language being used to do things in the world.

21. Cf. Winch's strategy in *The Idea of a Social Science* (London: Routledge, 1990 (1958): "[F]irst, a criticism of some prevalent ideas about the nature of philosophy; second, a criticism of some prevalent contemporary ideas about the nature of the social studies... . [M]y main war aim will be to demonstrate that the two apparently diverse fronts on which the war is being waged are not in reality diverse at all; that to be clear about the nature of philosophy and to be clear about the nature of the social studies amount to the same thing. For any worthwhile study of society must be philosophical in character and any worthwhile philosophy must be concerned with the nature of human society." (p.3). Winch is proclaiming here the inevitability of a certain connection between philosophy and (the understanding of) social relations. From which the possible tenability of the analogies I am hunting for can be deduced.

22. Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (ed. Baltimore; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), pp.189-193. "[It functions] in a way which contradicts the inherent potential, the natural purposes, of human drives." (S. Mulhall, "Species-being, teleology and individuality" (*Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 3:1, 1998), p.91) Here, of course, we see also one particular older-fashioned completely pre-Existentialist and pre-Post-Modern element of Marx's philosophical anthropology that would probably be disagreed with by Wittgenstein, and by many of the rest of us: a rather too Innatist picture of drives etc. as pre-given. See n.34 below, for more agreeable aspects of what Marx is up to hereabouts, though nevertheless we shall not give below -- for reasons of space -- more than extremely tentative hints as to whether one can make sense of the notion of something (namely money, in this case) distorting what it is so much a part of (namely, society.).

23. See e.g. para.s 96 and 110 of PI. And also Louis Sass's *The Paradoxes of Delusion: Wittgenstein, Schreber, and the Schizophrenic Mind* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell, 1994).

24. I leave aside for now complications consequent upon the respects in which 'use-value' for Marx is arguably a pre-social concept, and thus arguably not as alike to [linguistic] use as one might



desire.

25. See the Section on "Mulhall on the early Marx", below, for more on the perfectly everyday -- Heideggerian -- sense in which Marx is speaking of objects being for us useful-objects, rather than objects of contemplation. Marx is reminding us that the monetary value of something cannot be deduced from its appearance -- and nor even from its practical usefulness to us.

26. Though there are versions of psychotherapy which resist much more strongly than Freud Theoreticistic and Scientistic impulses, and which work toward their own eventual diminution -- for example, Gestalt, and Co-Counselling.

27. For example, there are (later) parts of that book that it is hard to avoid reading as, unfortunately, a quasi-empirical '(economic) theory of history', past and future -- though see below, where I suggest that if we understand the contemporary point of 'Scientific' Socialism (in any case more Engels's creature than Marx's), we will be less hard on Marx's sometime 'scientism'; and that we can then look to a Socialism between Science and Utopia, and stress that Marx's 'prophesying' was actually intelligently and almost rigorously deliberately low-key and thin on the ground. (See n.56, below)

28. One thinks perhaps of the *Tractatus* here, of its supposed (and in a sense quite actual and indeed thorough-going) denunciation of its own analyses. . . See the closing Sections of this paper.

29. Andrews, unpublished, p.1. Nested quote from *Capital*.

30. Andrews, op. cit., p.1.

31. See also p.193 of *Specters of Marx*.

32. See Lenin against Kautsky on the French Revolution (p.472 of his *Selected Works* (NY: International, 1971). But first, see Kautsky on the Paris Commune (pp.43-45 of his *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*): "If in 1875 Marx did not explain in detail what he understood by the dictatorship of the proletariat, it might well have been because he had expressed himself on this matter a few years before, in his study of the Civil War in France. In that work he wrote: "The Commune was essentially a government of the working class..." Thus the Paris Commune was, as Engels expressly declared in his introduction to the third edition of Marx's book, 'The Dictatorship of the Proletariat.' "It was, however, at the same time not the suspension of democracy, but was founded on its most thoroughgoing use, on the basis of universal suffrage. The power of the government was subjected to universal suffrage... Universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business..." Marx speaks constantly here of the general suffrage of the whole people, and not of the votes of a specially privileged class. The dictatorship of the proletariat was for him a condition which necessarily arose in a real democracy, because of the overwhelming numbers of the proletariat." We might risk speaking here not just of the idea of democracy as a profound and important one, but as one mirroring a fundamental insight concerning the nature of society and equality -- and perhaps as more, then, than just a strategy. If Kautsky is right (and see p.29 of his text), then the logic of the dictatorship of the proletariat in democracy leads of its own accord to the dictatorship of all -- which of course is not dictatorship at all (see



n.46, below). Though considerations of strategy might impel us to the propaganda of 'Science', or even to violence and dictatorship in its more obvious sense, the idea of democracy could be argued to be intrinsically linked to the notion of a whole people, of a community, and indeed of species-being -- on which, see below.

'But ... doesn't the (notion of the) proletariat still necessarily exclude? Surely, it is defined in opposition to the capitalist class?' Well, here is an intriguing comment on this matter, made by Kautsky: "[The proletariat's] great historical mission consists in the fact that the collective interests of society fall into line with its permanent class interests, which are not always the same thing as special sectional interests. It is a symptom of the maturity of the proletariat when its class consciousness is raised to the highest point by its grasp of large social relations and ends. This understanding is only made completely clear...not only by theoretical teaching, but by the habit of regarding things as a whole instead of looking at special interests which are furthered and extended by engaging in political action." (Kautsky pp.29-30. One of the ellipses contains an unfortunate reference to 'Scientific Socialism', which I think distracts from the argument as, after Kautsky, I am (re-) making it here). The collective interests of society coincide with the proletariat's interests, Kautsky claims. A fascinating idea for our purposes in this paper; but how can this be? It can be, but surely only if it turns out that, in the end, everyone is in a certain crucial sense a proletarian. If, once false consciousness and ideology are overcome -- or as the means of their overcoming --, all can be persuaded to see themselves as workers, then we will, for Marx, truly be human beings. ...We see in the debate over 'the dictatorship of the proletariat', albeit through a glass darkly, thoughts about human beings and society which are importantly to be found in more abstract form in Marx's philosophy. And crucially, I think, these thoughts actually can shed still a little more light on the problem of parasitism and idleness and illusion which is our main topic.

33. See p.170 of Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (London: Routledge, 1994) for his effort at deconstructing the class divisions within labour consequent upon distinguishing between hand and brain. Let me remark again that the irony of this deconstruction, unnoticed by Derrida, is that it must be to the end of clearing the ground for the recognition of different types of labour in all their specificity -- in such specificity that they may not even be called 'labor' any longer.

34. One might think here of the similar sense in which the recent work of Ian Hacking has endeavoured to establish different versions of 'social constructivism', and to suggest that, in any sense of those words which is not deeply-confused, one ought to see (say) Multiple Personality Disorder as 'more deeply' socially constructed than mind, and mind as in turn more socially constructed than a table.

35. For support, see e.g. pp.77-78 of Derrida's LI.

36. See the close of David Lamb's "The philosophy of praxis in Marx and Wittgenstein" (*Phil. Forum* XI:3, Spring 1980).

37. *Culture and Value*, p.11.

38. Compare Garfinkel's otherwise paradoxical remarks, involving treating what can appear to be factual statements as "recommendations", etc., in his "Preface" to *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1984).

39. See n.54, below.

40. See A.Sivaramakrishnan's "Living with alienation: a response to Stephen Mulhall", in *Angelaki* 3:1. He (like Derrida -- see p.159-160 of *Specters of Marx*, and my Appendix, above) queries whether use-value can intelligibly be said to pre-exist sociality. See p.104 of Sivaramakrishnan: "[Consider] the master-slave dialectic. ...[T]he master on triumphing over the slave ceases to be a true self-consciousness, because the recognition the master needs in order to be a self-consciousness now comes...from a subordinate consciousness. This consequence may render Hegel even more radically egalitarian than Marx... . Two directly political implications follow. One is that if species being -- that is, being intelligibly human -- is a form of dependency of all upon all ... then it is not clear that we can tolerate the continued existence of a system in which profit- or comfort- driven exchange is the sole engine of human teleology; such a system has among other results the consequence that the very creation of a dominant and a subordinate class deprives all members of both classes of their humanity. The second directly political implication is that there is no need to exalt, say, the industrial working class (or any other class) as a revolutionary class who will lead us out of enslavement by capital...; that fiction, with all its elisions of the impact and persistence of colonialism, racism, and sexism in human thought and action, has had disastrous consequences whenever it has been adopted by political movements anywhere in the world." The first consequence is consonant with my discussion of the sense in which we must understand the dominant parasitic class to be in reality simply a part of the "subordinate" class, a part of humanity; and the second consequence to be an admirable contemporary extension of Kautsky's concern that we understand 'the proletariat' as widely as possible, and that to do so will be democratic and non-exclusionary -- see n.22 above. See also p.202f. of S.Avineri's "Labor, Alienation and Social Classes in Hegel's Realphilosophie", in *The Legacy of Hegel* (eds. O'Malley, Algozin, Kainz and Rice; The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973); and pp.51-53 of J.McCarney's "Shaping ends: Reflections of Fukuyama", *New Left Review* 202 (1993), 37-53.

41. See Stephen Mulhall, "Species-Being, Teleology and Individuality II: Kant on human nature", in *Angelaki* 3:1.

42. Let us be human, as Wittgenstein once remarked. Let us also be clear: this humanism is, at its best (contrast n.17, above), not a limited Essentialist picture of what is human. It is rather an expansive, non-constrained vision, akin to that that we find in Pragmatist-Wittgensteinianism (cf. the Pragmatist emphasis on growth). Here is Stephen Mulhall on the topic (on pp.18-19 of his "Species-Being, Teleology and Individuality I: Marx on species being", in *Angelaki*: 3:1 (April 1998): "[I]t cannot be said that human beings have a fixed or given life-activity or species-nature. Rather...human nature is... a constantly receding goal towards which each member of the human species must aim, not something conferred upon each person simply by virtue of his membership of the species. Marx makes this point [as follows]: "[M]an is not merely a natural being; he is a human natural being. he is a being for himself, and therefore, a species-being... . Consequently, human objects are not natural objects as they present themselves directly, nor is human sense, as it is immediately and objectively given, human sensibility and human objectivity.'" And this again buttresses the thought that thinking of Marxism as a quasi-natural-science must be a mistake. Rather, what Marx says here is remarkably compatible with (e.g.) a Winchian approach to 'human science'.

43. Mulhall, p.25; nested quote from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (ed. Baltimore.

New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963). Marx goes on: "The manifestation of [the individuals'] life -- even when it does not appear directly in the form of a communal manifestation, accomplished in association with other men -- is, therefore, a manifestation and affirmation of social life. Individual human life and species-life are not different things, even though the mode of existence of individual life is necessarily either a more specific or a more general mode of species-life...".

44. Which is present, as already noted (n.30), both in Hegel, and in Kautsky! And once its political controversiality and potential danger is admitted, I think we can see (see n.33, above) clearly its philosophical importance and reasonableness, when it is taken aright, too.

45. See below. It is 'also' seeing in the sense of the Wittgensteinian Marxist 'descriptivising' of Andrews (see above) and of Nigel Pleasants's forthcoming (in *History of the Human Sciences*) Wittgensteinian work on the commodity.

46. Thus I am speaking in this paper of the aims and ends of philosophy (and politics) -- I am in a sense looking forward to the end, or at least toward the 'close', to how one hopes to overcome or expurgate (oneself); though I am not trying to look forward to what comes after that. That would be unwise, purely speculative, hubristic.

47. P.296, op.cit. Lamb goes on, "It is well known that Marx upheld a partisan approach to his philosophy by tying the solutions of philosophical problems to the objectives of the proletariat. Whether any social class can end philosophy as such is a dubious matter indeed...". These points are partly answered by my consideration in the present paper of the philosophical echoes of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat', a concept which looks at least somewhat less like fighting words as soon as one thinks carefully about the logic of the concepts of 'worker', and of 'species-being' and 'alienation', in Marx's philosophical writings. Abdul Janmohamed writes (p.36 of his *Refiguring Values, Power, Knowledge*), that "*labor* must be understood in its broader implications, not just as activity that transforms "nature" for human consumption but also as activity that consequently (trans)forms all aspects of human society. "Labor" is often interpreted exclusively to designate either the category of the proletariat, which is then designated as the privileged agent of historical change, or the activity that transforms nature, which is then defined as qualitatively different from other kinds of activity. But it can be argued that for Marx "labor" includes all "activity" that "produces" material and cultural components that constitute society. Thus [as Marx writes in *Capital*] the "elementary factors of the labour-process are 1, the personal activity of man, i.e., work itself, 2, the subject (i.e. object) of that work, 3, its instruments." As Marx elaborates, the instruments or means of labor are themselves the products of previous labor, as indeed is the object of labor, including raw material. There is not a single product of human society that is not always already saturated with labor... . The category of "production" too is to be understood in its broader form, as incorporating moments of consumption...and exchange... . [I]t seems to me that the privileging of certain kinds of labor over others or of production over consumption and distribution are not so clearly entailed in Marx."

48. Mulhall, p.95; cf. also here Mulhall's (semi-Winchian?) account of Marx on alienation, on pp.93-94: "When human beings engage in activities in such a way that those activities constitute expressions of their individuality, they fulfill themselves as humans; but this way of engaging in practical activity is itself characterized in terms of how it is experienced by the individual. Marx is in effect saying that that the sort of practical activity he has in mind as fulfilling practical activity is

the sort which the person involved would be prepared to characterise as an essential expression of his individuality... Marx's criteria for distinguishing alienated from non-alienated labour seem to be experiential in nature. ...[W]hen he attempts to explicate [his] notions of labour as external and [of] labour as a means, he refers to the worker's feelings of misery and debasement, to the fact that the worker does not feel at home when he is working. ...[T]he question of whether the given practical activity is alienating or not is a function of the nature of the relationship in which the person stands to that activity; and spelling out the nature of that relationship inevitably involves reference to how the person experiences that relationship -- to his feelings and attitudes." (And compare, further: the philosopher being alienated from his words; not feeling at home with them -- that is, if the philosopher is not radically self-deceived (as of course most philosophers mostly are, from (say) David Lewis to Jerry Fodor.))

49. On p.98.

50. Mulhall, pp.99-101. See also his *On Being in the World: Wittgenstein and Heidegger on Seeing Aspects* (London: Routledge, 1990).

51. For an excellent examination of problematic residues of humanism in Heidegger, an examination which stresses our character as animals and which seeks to put forward a 'deflationary naturalism' which is highly cognisant of our essential sociality, consult S.Glendinning's *On Being with Others: Heidegger, Derrida, Wittgenstein* (London: Routledge, 1998).

52. Perhaps now it can be seen that I am suggesting that Marxism need be neither Utopian nor Scientific (see also n.27, above). See Zhang Longxi's and Andrei Marga's essays in *Whither Marxism?* (op.cit.). As Marga argues, a key problem of 'actually-existing Marxism' has been its imposition, its ignoring of lived experiences. But perhaps, after Mulhall, Marxism can be, rather, based on careful 'social studies' descriptions of human phenomena, and then on action (words and deeds) both self-realizing and ultimately self-questioning (i.e. self-nihilating). Perhaps I am even laying out in this paper the groundwork for a Wittgensteinian Socialism.

53. Baker and Hacker use the term 'Cultural Naturalism', a term obviously applicable also to Dewey -- and why not to Marx, too? Again, Mulhall's reading would I think strongly suggest the appropriateness of such a label.

54. Marx, *Ec. and Phil. Manuscripts* p.157.

55. For an exemplary account of all this, see Alice Crary's paper in *The New Wittgenstein* (op.cit.). Crary finds both the 'quietist' readers of Wittgenstein and the 'reformist' readers sharing a common error: the thought that there is some kind of theory of the use of language in Wittgenstein which has either conservative or radical implications.

56. We might compare here a sense in which the alleged 'picture theory of meaning' in the *Tractatus* is true: isn't it harmlessly, trivially true, if we only hear it aright, that we make to ourselves pictures of facts, using pictures, sentences, etc.? And this would be the place, too, to reflect that the strange character of philosophical uses of language, of 'grammatical remarks' etc., is that we want to say of them both that they are true without opposition (e.g. "I can't feel your pain", "There is only logical necessity") and that if per impossibile they are contradicted, then they still

haven't really been contradicted (e.g. If we find a sense for "I can feel your pain", then we haven't contradicted our previous grammatical remark.). This it seems to me explains how we can reasonably want to say both "Class society is impossible" and "Class society is actual." Because both are (purpose-relative) grammatical remarks; or metaphors. Neither, in a certain important sense, actually involves asserting anything.

57. *Capital*, in *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp.322-3. (All the same, I would be happier if Marx didn't present himself here as having made a counter-discovery -- this is unhelpful, I feel, for reasons which should be obvious from my use of Andrews etc.)

58. See Gavin Kitching's *Marxism and Science: Analysis of an Obsession* (University Park, PA: Penn State, 1994). My argument takes Kitching's excellent explorations one step further forward -- to doubting whether some of Marx's own canonical writings are intelligibly interpreted as committed to the disastrous scientism which Kitching rightly exposes. (Also, my argument does not commit the drastic (though common) interpretive error of seeing the *Tractatus*, as Kitching does, as a scientific work.)

59. It is interesting to look here, especially in comparison with Kautsky, at Lenin's apparently (but I think not actually) contradictory remarks on the state and its use, destruction or withering. The idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a means to communism, shares something in common with its virulently opposed democratic opposite(s) -- an aim of real-izing (realizing as, making real) the equality of all and the unreality of class distinctions: "[E]very state is a machine for the suppression of one class by another. ...Marx and Engels [demonstrated] the need for the proletariat to "smash" the bourgeois state machine... You cannot have liberty, equality and so on where there is suppression. That is why Engels said: 'So long as the proletariat still needs the state, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist.'" And here is Marx, 'in dialogue with' Bakunin: "B: If there exists a state, there is inevitably domination, hence also slavery... What does it mean for the proletariat to be organized as the ruling class"?

M: It means that the proletariat, instead of fighting against the economically privileged classes in each individual instance, has acquired sufficient power and organisation to use the general means of coercion against them; however, it can only use such economic means as abolish its own character as wage worker, hence as a class; so its complete victory coincides with the end of its domination, for its class character comes to an end...

B: Then there will be no government, no state, but if there is a state, there will be governors and slaves.

M: This means only: when class domination ends, there will be no state in the present political sense of the word...

B: The universal right of election of people's representatives and rulers of the state by the whole people [cf. Kautsky] -

M: ...--such a thing as a whole people in the present sense of the word is a fantasy--...The class domination of the workers over the resisting strata of the old world must last until the economic foundations of the existence of classes are destroyed.

B:...If their state is going to be really a people's one, why should it abolish itself? but if its abolition is necessary for the real liberation of the people, how can they dare to call it a people's state?... They say that such a state yoke, a dictatorship, is a necessary transitional means for



attaining the most complete popular liberation. So, to liberate the masses of the people they first have to be enslaved. Our polemic rests and is founded on this contradiction. They maintain that only a dictatorship, their own naturally, can create the people's will; we answer, no dictatorship can have any other aim than to perpetuate itself, and it can only give rise to and instill slavery in the people that tolerates it; freedom can only be created by freedom... [Pp.544-548 of Tucker (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader* (2nd ed.; NY:Norton, 1978), "After the revolution: Marx debates Bakunin"].

60. One can depict a preferred society -- in outline. That much, as Wittgenstein once remarked, Marx can for sure give us. Thus Zhang Longxi in his "Socialism: From Scientific to Utopian" (in *Whither Marxism?* (London: Routledge, 1995; eds. Cullenberg and Magnus)) perhaps goes a little too far; for we are not speaking here of a realized utopia or even of a specified utopia. What we do envisage is the withering away of the 'enforcers' -- of the state (and its successors -- e.g. arguably, multinationals), and of that imaginary enforcer, that imaginary sovereign, philosophy.

61. Here I am following Simon Glendinning. See pp.84-5, (op. cit.).

62. I think it is worth thinking here of the key respects in which the great philosophical 'Faustians' have been destructive in their philosophical aims, and in which we may want to say, against Redner (and Jaspers, and Gellner), that this is a great thing. Nietzsche's philosophy, for example, is in an important sense wholly negative. But this is a triumph, in the sense in which, I am claiming, it is a triumph also in Austin, in Marx, and in Foucault, and (above all, perhaps) in Wittgenstein (who only assembles reminders, and deals with philosophical problems as they come along, who has no philosophical system at all). These were the first philosophers to effectively give themselves a self-denying ordinance for how the future, utopia, was to be (No wonder that they wondered whether they were really philosophers at all). Marx was occasionally tempted to describe what Communism would/could be like (what things would be like after the withering away of the state), as Nietzsche was tempted to describe what life could be like after the perishing of the ascetic ideal, but both mostly managed to resist this impulse. Again, this asceticism, this holding back from the wish to write a philosophy hopelessly attempting to be 'in' the future, is, I am claiming, a triumph. It is high time that this remarkable achievement were fully recognized. Arguably, a precondition for that is the recognition of the character of Nietzsche's argument, above all in *The Genealogy of Morality*, an account of which I hope to publish shortly.

63. Wittgenstein, more than Marx, would of course start out much more prominently by having one change oneself.

64. See my "Return to party politics: a fragment of activist philosophizing", forthcoming in *Exit 9*.

65. This is one point at which the dynamic of reading and employing Wittgenstein is clearly structurally similar to that of the line running through Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida (and their 'magic words'), et al, and in a fuller presentation we should investigate this properly. Part of the problem is that any philosophic vocabulary, but most particularly any novel set of terms or phrases, risks a re-reification of philosophical categories. For discussion, see for instance Rorty's "Deconstruction and Circumvention", (*Critical Inquiry* 11 (1984) 1-23). Even if Philosophy is ended, philosophising cannot guarantee the hope of bringing itself to an end. Philosophical activity is a process of self-questioning and re-clarification (if we are still wise to use the latter term) of potentially indefinite dimension and duration, a highly demanding and potentially quite unrewarding



exercise, even though conjoined with the hope that the activity will constitute and 'yield' a practical and ethical harvest.

66. P.61 of *Culture and Value*.

67. This quotation is from *The German Ideology*, p.37. Here again, my (and Andrews's) approach, drawing directly on Marx's, is consonant with Derrida's approach. On p.130f. of *Specters of Marx*, Derrida is clear that conjuring away is not enough -- one must work, and take action, too. To destroy hallucinations is not to destroy realities, especially in the social world -- though on pp.141-2f., Derrida is not as clear as he might be that, for Marx himself, the borderline between collective hallucination and social reality is actually necessarily elusive and porous; that, to coin a phrase, this is a dualism in need of (and in receipt of, in Wittgenstein's as in Marx's hands) some deconstructive attention.

68. See n.20, above. Such a Marxian economics would probably be in significant part a Sraffian economics -- let us note that as *Capital* was subtitled *A Critique of Political Economy*, so Sraffa's great work, *Production of Commodities by means of Commodities* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1960) was subtitled *Prelude to a Critique of Economic Theory*. (And Sraffa was, of course, the man thanked more fulsomely than anyone else, ever, in Wittgenstein's Prefaces.) See also D. Andrews's "Nothing is Hidden: a Wittgensteinian Interpretation of Sraffa", *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 20: pp.763-777. Andrews there argues, very consonantly with my approach here, that "Sraffa's analysis implies a criticism not simply of the neoclassical value theory but also of the whole project toward which that theory is addressed, i.e. that of attempting to provide an account of the determination of a set of prices that are assumed to underlie observable market prices." (p.764). Andrews thus holds that Sraffa did not, contrary to popular opinion, attempt to revert to classical economic theory against neoclassical individualism, but rather undermined the very idea of a theoretical approach to economics. As in my reading of Marx here, Sraffa thus adopted the classical approach only to reduce both it and its opponents to absurdity. And his 'models' of the economy, like Marx's, are then to be read, methodologically-speaking, more like 'language-games' are -- as 'objects of comparison' -- rather than as the basis for theorizations (see p.768f. of Andrews's paper, the section given the title "Production of Commodities As a Language Game".)

69. Thus it is also to take a step beyond Davis's use of Wittgenstein's anti-private-language argument to undermine the absurdities of neoclassical individualism in economics -- for that task could be equally well-performed by Hegel, by Marx on a relatively conventional (e.g. Rubinsteinian) reading, or by Post-Structuralism (Lacan, Baudrillard, Derrida). As I argue in the Appendix, what is distinctive in Wittgenstein, and in Marx as I read him here, is something more -- it is a bringing back of words and actions from 'metaphysicality' to their everydayness, and a profound recognition of the wonderfully self-destructive character of all such bringing.

70. In *The Raven*, forthcoming.

71. On the word "conservative", see Chomsky's "Rollback II", *Z Magazine* February 1995 (p.20f.).

72. It will be objected, of course, that for some people, such as some Fascists and some leaders/writers, using a word or phrase like (e.g.) "freedom fighters" to connote what most of us would understand better by a phrase like "murderous butchers" is an everyday use. But the same is

true, of course, in the case of the words of metaphysics -- some philosophers on an everyday basis use a word like (e.g.) "name" to connote what most of us would understand better by a word like "demonstrative", and deny that proper names are 'actually' names at all (!), etc. . The importance of this is at least twofold: The Chomskian method in political thought, and the -- arguably -- concomitant Wittgensteinian method in philosophical thought must be

(1) 'therapeutically persuasive' in intent -- we must always hold out hope that the other will themselves recognise that in some sense they meant to be using the terms in the sense in which we suggest they are generally/properly used, all along; and

(2) only rarely if ever fully ethical neutral in intent and nature -- the task of returning someone to the ordinary uses of their words is arguably just not a non-moral or a non-political one. This point follows up the point I made earlier concerning the sense in which Wittgenstein leaving everything as it is need not be contradictory in spirit to Marx wanting to change the world.

For the philosophical background to these claims, see e.g. S.Cavell's *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome* (Chicago: U.Chicago, 1990), Wittgenstein's own remarks about the spirit of his work and the importance of people changing the way they talk and live, and my own remarks on this above.

73. Quote taken from his "Wittgenstein on Deconstruction", in *The New Wittgenstein* (op.cit.).

74. Though I hope it will be evident to the reader that I do not endorse the moments in Rorty where he suggests that one can simply give up philosophizing when one chooses (the crude Pragmatist reading of PI para. 133). 'Philosophy' is not something one can get out of simply by deciding to -- in part, because there is much (bad) philosophy in the thinking of many who are not philosophers.

75. On the question of the historicity of Marx's own ideas, there is no better place to start than from the 'Afterword' to the German edition (on pp.300-1) of *Capital* (op.cit.), where, by means of extensively quoting from a sympathetic review, Marx conveys the dialectical nature of his work.

76. As Derrida remarks, mocking Searle, "[A]s though the meaning of these words ('real life') could immediately be a subject of unanimity, without the slightest risk of parasitism; as though literature, theater, deceit, infidelity, hypocrisy, infelicity, parasitism and the simulation of real life were not part of real life!" (LI, pp.89-90).

77. According to Conant's reading -- see the closing segments of his paper, "Elucidation and Nonsense in Frege and Wittgenstein", in Read and Crary (op.cit.).

78. Derrida perhaps does not realize this, and does not anticipate my vein of criticism of his work, because, astoundingly, he fails to grapple anywhere in his corpus with Wittgenstein's work. In my opinion, it is unfortunate that there has not been more engagement on the part of recent French philosophy with mainstream Anglo-American philosophy -- but it is nothing short of catastrophic and unforgivable that (with the exception of the deeply-flawed work of Lyotard) the French Structuralists, Post-Modernists, Post-Structuralists etc. have not engaged with Wittgenstein's work at all. See, for instance, Derrida's list of supposed end-of-philosophy philosophers on p.15 of *Specters*, which of course includes Marx, but, bizarrely, leaves out Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein, who wrote almost entirely in German, not English, who was a Viennese, who in terms of the history of philosophy primarily inherited a Continental mantle (Kant, Frege, Schopenhauer), who was

sympathetic to the ideas of Continental philosophers and thinkers mostly despised by mainstream English-speaking philosophy... why is it that the foremost representatives of contemporary Continental philosophy ignore him? (Can it be, perhaps, partly, because they hear worrisome rumours that he may have stolen their thunder, and left them mostly with stage-whispers?) In the present context, in any case, I think that a Wittgensteinian understanding of the commodity makes clearer a lot of what Derrida observes.

79. I am not here defending Davidson's claim, only alluding to it as an example of what I am talking about.

80. I want very much to thank the participants in the 'International Marx and Wittgenstein Colloquium', Trinity College Cambridge, March 29-31, 1999, and also to thank the members of the Manchester Ethnography Group (M.M.U.), where I gave this talk again on April 29 1999. Thanks also to David Andrews, Steven Lukes and Luke Mulhall.

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The Department of Philosophy  
Humboldt State University  
Arcata, California

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